

Edo's anti-grazing law 'll resolve farmer/herders' conflict, enhance security says Obaseki

By ISAAC OLAMIKAN

The Edo State Governor, Mr Godwin Obaseki, has said his government has signed the anti-grazing

law to tackle farmer/herders' clashes and ensure peace and security across Edo communities.

Obaseki disclosed this at the Edo Central Security Council Meeting, held in Irrua, the Administrative Headquarters of Esan

Central Local Government Area, Edo State.

The governor said, "I am pleased to inform you that the Edo State Government now has a law which prohibits open grazing in Edo State. The bill has been signed into

law by me. It was signed on the 27th of May and the objectives of the law are as follows:

"The law prohibits open grazing of cattle and other livestock in the state and creates

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Nigeria's drug menace worsens

- NDLEA arrests 51 suspects in Kano raid, 4 notorious trans-border traffickers in Adamawa, Ondo
- Intercepts 2.7m Tramadol tabs, seizes tons of illicit substances in FCT, others
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Marwa



Siezed drugs

Nigeria's drug menace worsens

By PAUL MICHAEL and
FRIDAY OMOSOLA
(Akure)

Operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have arrested 51 suspects for drug-related offences in Kano State.

Director of Media and Advocacy, Femi Babafemi, disclosed this one Sunday in a statement made available to The Trumpet, saying the suspects were arrested in a raid at a restaurant.

"In Kano, 51 suspects were arrested in a raid at Sky restaurant in Nasarawa area of the state on Friday 29th July. The suspects were caught with various quantities of cannabis and codeine-based cough syrup," Babafemi stated.

He further disclosed that no fewer than four notorious trans-border drug dealers were arrested in Adamawa by the Agency.

"In Adamawa state, four notorious drug dealers

in Konkol and Belel, two villages at Nigeria - Cameroon border have been arrested for exporting and retailing Tramadol and importing Diazepam into the country," he said.

He gave the names of the suspects as Kabiru Ahmadu, Eric Emil, Abdulmumini Bapetil and Alphonsus Yusuf while stating that a total of 59.018kg of Tramadol, Diazepam, Exol-5, Cannabis Sativa and two jerry cans of formalin substance (Suck & Die) were recovered from them.

Meanwhile, no fewer than 2,750,000 tablets of Tramadol 225mg weighing 1,650 kilograms worth about N1.375 billion were intercepted at the Apapa port in Lagos by NDLEA's operatives.

According to Babafemi, "The consignment packed in 55 cartons of Tapentadol and Carisoprodol types of Tramadol was seized during the examination of a container number SUDU 7538656 on Saturday 30th July following credible intelligence."

In a similar



Buhari

development, anti-narcotic officers at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) Ikeja thwarted bids by drug traffickers to export various psychoactive substances to London, UK and Dubai, UAE through the Lagos airport in the past week.

"At least, five suspects have so far been arrested in connection to the attempts," Babafemi

stated.

He further said, "On Monday 25th July, a Dubai, UAE bound passenger Ms Ebhodaghei Gloria Osenemeshen was intercepted during the outward clearance of travellers on Rwanda Air via Kigali to Dubai. Discovered in her luggage were sachets of Tramadol 225mg concealed inside garri, a cassava product packed among other

foodstuffs.

"She, however, claimed that the bag was given to her by someone who she passed the night in his house before coming to the airport to help deliver to another person in Dubai.

"The following day, Tuesday 26th July, a total of 50 blocks of cannabis Sativa with a total weight of 27.1kg concealed inside large quantity of crayfish going to London, UK as part of a consolidated cargo were seized at the SAHCO export shed.

"Same day, a Dubai-bound female passenger, Emebradu Precious Rachael, was arrested with 1.8kg cannabis packed inside bitter leaf in her luggage while attempting to board Rwanda Air flight to UAE via Kigali.

"The mother of one who hails from Oghara in Ethiope West Local Government Area of Delta State said she was into selling of men's wears before she decided to travel to Dubai to expand her clothing business. She claimed her ex-boyfriend that lives in Dubai, requested her to bring the bag, which contains the illicit substance along with foodstuff.

"In the same vein, operatives at the NAHCO import shed of the airport on Saturday 30th July evacuated cartons of khat leaf with a total weight of 51.50kg. The consignment had earlier come in from Sierra Leone on Royal Air Moroc flight."

The spokesperson also disclosed that no fewer than 90 blocks of cannabis (48.2kg) and 700grams of methamphetamine were intercepted at Jabi motor park in Abuja. "A suspect has been arrested in connection with the drug exhibits," he added.

Also, no less than 4,010 ampoules of pentazocine injection were seized on Friday 29th July when a commercial vehicle with registration number Sokoto RBA 220 XA was intercepted along Yawuri - Kebbi road in Kebbi State. Two suspects, Muktar Yunusa, 26 and Lukman Aliyu, 30, arrested.

While earlier in a raid operation in Oko-Olowo area of Ilorin on Tuesday 26th July led to the arrest of Onaolapo Zakariyau, 50, with 79kg cannabis sativa.

Commending men and officers of the anti-narcotics Agency, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig

Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) urged them to remain resolute in pursuit of the Agency's goal of ridding Nigeria of illicit substances.

Meanwhile, in a related development a 25-year-old Destiny Agbaijoh, a suspected killer, arrested by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in Ondo State, has disclosed that he would die if he divulged his mission and the identity of his sponsors.

Recall that The Trumpet had earlier reported that Destiny was arrested with one AK-47, one pump action, 91 bullets of 5.56 mm, 16 cartridges and cash of N347,000.

Destiny, who said he was a timber trader, stated this after he was paraded in Akure, the state capital. He said he did not take the bag which contained an AK-47, one pump action, 91 bullets of 5.56 mm, 16 cartridges and cash of N347,000 to the Police station because he never knew it would bring problems for him.

"I saw it in a bush in the place where I am working. I saw it in a nylon bag they used to wrap it and I carried it to my village. I didn't know it would cause me problems. I was coming from Bayelsa State and was going to my home town after Agadagba, in Ese-Odo Council area of Ondo State. The money is my own and it was from my timber business."

The State Commandant of the NDLEA, Mr Kayode Raji, while parading the suspect, said the suspect was arrested during a stop and search operation along Ore-Okitipupa Road. Raji added that the suspect tried to bribe his men on duty with the cash found on him, which his men rejected and took him into custody.

According to him, "the suspect was arrested on 20th of July, along Ore-Okitipupa Road by our men on stop and search operation. Upon search, he was found with various arms and ammunition of various kinds.

"He was also arrested with strap bags and we asked him what it was used for, he said he would die if he confessed it. It looks like bags where they keep dead bodies or mangled bodies of human beings. We have done our preliminary investigation and we are going to hand him over to the Nigerian Police."

Edo's anti-grazing law 'll resolve farmer/herders' conflict, enhance security says Obaseki

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designated ranching areas for the rearing and grazing of cattle and other animals in the state. It will control and regulate the grazing and rearing of cattle and other livestock in designated ranching areas of Edo State.

"It is meant to eliminate the conflict between nomadic cattle herders and their agents and the local breeders and owners, communities, farmers and private individuals and institutions. It will eliminate land degradation, air, and water pollution, loss of biodiversity, deforestation and other menaces arising from open grazing.

"It will create a conducive environment for large-scale crop production. It would promote modern techniques of animal husbandry through the creation of ranching areas. It would promote jobs and investment opportunities in cattle and other livestock farming."

According to him, the law "will prevent the destruction of crops; it will ensure the control and

management of diseases and enhance healthy breeding of cattle and other livestock animals. It will promote international best practices in dairy and beef production. It will reduce the incidents of road accidents caused by open grazing and grazing of livestock.

"It will promote and enhance high and healthier breed of livestock and ensure security in ranching areas and ensure good relationships between herders of cattle and local communities and individuals, and address the security challenges associated with open grazing in Edo State."

Disclosing plans to set up a cattle and livestock committee to facilitate the implementation of the law, Obaseki said, "There would be a cattle and livestock committee which will be chaired by a retired senior security officer, not below the rank of a major or its equivalent in any of the forces. It will have a representative of the governor on security matters. The committee will also have the state

Chairman of the vigilante groups and three representatives of the vigilante group, one from each senatorial district.

"It will have a representative of the Commissioner of Police, Department of State Services, civil defence, Nigeria Legion, and the secretary will be in a rank of a chief state council.

"The Managing Director of EdoGIS will be on the committee; one representative of each of the traditional rulers from three senatorial districts will be on the committee; two representatives of registered cattle or other livestock farmer's associations will be on the committee, while three community youths selected from the three senatorial areas of the state will be on the committee.

"This committee will have a lot of powers to set the rules for anybody who wants to be involved in livestock business in the state and also impose required fines. So, it is now a crime for anybody to just allow their cattle or animals to roam without control. And before the end

of August, the committee will be constituted and inaugurated," he added.

The governor at the meeting urged the traditional rulers in Esanland to identify all the black spots and report the same to the appropriate authorities for follow-up, adding, "Nobody can come to your house and stay without your permission and knowledge. Is it possible? If you find a person you didn't permit to stay there and you want to remove the person and you can't, that's when you need support from outside to help you do it.

"However, we want to know who they are. Are they people of good character? Do you know them? If they do anything outside, are you going to be responsible for their actions?" he queried.

The governor further pledged to sustain support to the local vigilante to facilitate the fight against crime and criminality, urging local government councils to ensure they register only persons of good character as vigilantes.



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A' Ibom records one case of monkey pox – Health Commissioner

By ISAAC JOB, Uyo

Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Health has confirmed one case of monkey pox diagnosed in the state and asked residents not to panic.

Speaking to newsmen in Uyo on Sunday, the Commissioner for Health Prof Augustine Umoh said the only case discovered in the state recently was external as the patient was brought into the state from outside.

He recalled that monkey pox was first discovered in 1958 and had since spread to

other countries in the world including Europe and America adding that people are worried about it.

The Commissioner disclosed that the spread of the disease is not as fast as covid 19 which has devastated the entire world within a short time.

Umoh said that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared monkey pox a public health emergency of international concern.

"In Akwa Ibom state, we had someone who came in from outside the state and his test revealed that he was infected with monkey

pox. So that one case was external to us but was diagnosed Akwa in Akwa Ibom."

He directed all residents to report incidents of monkey pox to the nearest health facilities in the state for urgent medical attention.

"Monkey pox does not spread fast like covid 19 but it is necessary to report such incidents for quick intervention by health workers.

"Although we have not noticed any internal incident of monkey pox except the one we diagnosed from a visitor who came into the state, we must be watchful," he said



Umoh

4 feared dead in renewed transport union clash in Lagos

No fewer than four persons have been killed in a clash between rival groups over the right for the sale of tickets and collection of tolls from truck drivers along the port corridor.

Our sources claimed that the clash was between members of the Lagos State Park and Garage Management and other unions that are yet to be identified.

The names of the victims could not be ascertained at the press time, but an official of the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, who said he does not have the authority to speak on the matter, confirmed the death of four of its members, adding that the leadership of the union will issue an official statement on the matter tomorrow.

It would be recalled that members of the Lagos State Parks and Garage Committee, last week, invaded the port's access roads, dislodging members of truckers' unions and selling tickets to truck drivers at the second gate of the Tin-Can Island Port in Apapa.

A visit to the port by our correspondent showed that members of the committee came into the port as early as 9 am with about 200 members, alongside policemen from the Rapid Response Squad, RRS.

As the crisis brewed, it was gathered that the Port Police Commissioner, Mr Taiwo Adeleke, who was alerted of the situation, made a distress call to the Commissioner of Police, Mr Abiodun Alabi, and the Head of RRS to ascertain if they were aware of the presence of the Parks and Garage Committee in the port.

It further gathered that both Adeleke and Alabi said they were oblivious of the visit, a development that made Adeleke visit the scene.

Immediately members of the Parks Committee with their Police escort sighted CP Adeleke, they took to their heels.

Information at our disposal revealed that members of the committee had collected tolls for about two hours before the arrival of CP Adeleke.

Reacting to the development, Chairman of the Lagos State Park and Garage Management, Mr Musiliu Akinsanya, said he does not think that his boys were behind the attack because their operation has nothing to do with the port environment.

He said: "Maybe some people went there to cause trouble under the name of Lagos State Park and Garage Management but I am very sure our members did not attack because our operations are not within the port environment."

Also speaking on the development, an official of MOB Resources Limited, operators of MOB Truck Park, said: "MOB Tin-Can is currently closing its gate as there is a serious brawl between rival gangs. Once things normalise, we can open our gate. This is to secure lives and property within our premises."

A truck owner, who simply identified himself as Michael, said: "It is unfortunate that a city, which prides itself as a mega city, would allow such non-sense to happen."

N2.5b Debt: Imo govt replies Innoson motors

Say firms claim is mischievous

By ATHAN AGBAKWURU, Owerri

Imo State Government has reacted to the allegation by Innoson Vehicles Manufacturing Company, IVM, claiming that the state government under Governor Hope Uzodinma is owing it over N2.5billion as mischievous, distasteful and cheap blackmail against the current administration.

Reacting to a threat by the company that it is filing a lawsuit to recover 'over N2.5billion debt owed' being the cost of vehicles supplied to the state, Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Hon. Declan Mbadiwe Emelumba deplored the manner the company is going about the re-recovery of the so-called debt.

Emelumba insisted that the company's claims are half-truths intended to impugn the integrity of the state government for ulterior motives.

According to him,

the truth is that the government bought vehicles worth over N5 billion from Innoson motors and has so far paid them N3.5billion.

Contrary to the claim of Innoson Motors, the commissioner disclosed that the N2.5billion is actually the balance due from the original value of the purchase and expressed regret that the firm for reasons best known to them, decided to hide this fact from the public.

Emelumba insisted that the total value of the vehicles supplied was in excess of N5 billion and that the government has been servicing the debt since then.

He revealed that the management of Innoson Motors was actually the one that breached the contractual agreement with the state government regarding the sale and maintenance of the vehicles.

The commissioner further explained that there is a clause in the



Gov Uzodinma

purchase agreement stipulating the citing of a maintenance workshop in Owerri and a mobile workshop as well, by Innoson Motors, for the maintenance of the vehicles.

He noted that in spite of the fact that the company breached this agreement, the state government has been servicing the debt and still maintaining the vehicles, disclosing that more than 70% of the vehicles have already broken down.

He said both the threat by the company

and the resort to media trial of the government were in bad faith.

His words, "It appears the company is out to rubbish the integrity of the government, otherwise it would not have twisted the facts of the case and published the same concerning this honest business transaction, even when it failed to show the public the terms of the contract and the clauses the government breached therein. The whole thing smacks of mischief and bad faith.

"It is regrettable that



Chukwuma

Innoson Motors had not actually exhausted all means of negotiation before threatening the government with a lawsuit.

"The mischievous resort to media trial has confirmed that the company is more interested in compromising the integrity of the government rather than being paid its outstanding balance from the contract sum."

Disclosing that no court process has been served, the government will meet the company in court as soon as a process is served.

NSCDC, Navy pledge synergy in fight against economic saboteurs

By CHRIS EZEONOH, Port Harcourt

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and Nigerian Navy have pledged collaboration in the fight against crime and illegal oil dealings in Rivers State.

The two security agencies came up with this at a strategic meeting between the State Commandant of NSCDC, Michael Besong Ogar and Commander, Nigerian Navy Ship Pathfinder Port Harcourt; Commodore SD Ibrahim at the naval command headquarters in Port Harcourt at the weekend.

According to Ogar, the meeting was premised on the need to cement the long-term existing relationship with the Nigerian Navy which he said remains a critical partner in the fight against illegal dealings in petroleum products across the coastal region.

Commandant Ogar noted that from the series of arrests made by the Command and cases handed over for prosecution by the NNS Pathfinder, the NSCDC Rivers State Command through her Legal Department has gotten forfeitures of 39 boats and proceeds remitted to the Federal Government coffers.

He further noted that 11 suspects had been convicted for illegal oil bunkering activities, vandalism of oil pipelines, conspiracy and economic sabotage while 30 suspects are currently being arraigned in court.

While extolling the outstanding role of the Nigerian Navy and the level of relationship with the

NSCDC; Commandant Michael Ogar solicited for a more robust synergy especially in the areas of training and retraining of personnel, sharing of intelligence before, during and after tactical operations to enhance the war against criminally minded persons sabotaging the nation's economy through illegal oil bunkering activities in Rivers State.

On his part, the Commander Nigerian Navy Ship Pathfinder Port Harcourt; Commodore SD Ibrahim called for a concerted effort by the security agencies and all critical stakeholders in the fight against illegal oil bunkering in Rivers State which he said had overtime erupted into environmental degradation, health hazards and pollution of the Marine life.

He maintained that the war against vandals would not be limited to arrests of suspects on the waterways alone but also extended to their sponsors and potential buyers of the products noting that with thorough investigation the prosecuting agencies must dig deep into such cases to unravel the numerous actors behind the crime.

Commodore Ibrahim assured that his command would give maximum support to the NSCDC Rivers State Command in capacity building for effective service delivery, intelligence gathering, joint operations and unrelenting war against pipeline vandalism in order to rid the nation's economy of saboteurs.

IGP decries unauthorised sales, use of police uniforms, orders prosecution of offenders

By PAUL MICHAEL

The Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba has raised concern over the unauthorised possession and use of Police uniforms and accoutrements by some individuals, movies and skit makers.

In a statement issued by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, on Sunday, the IGP also expressed worry over the illegal sale of Police materials and accoutrements by traders in shops, open stores not approved nor recognized by Police authority.

Adejobi said the IGP has ordered the immediate arrest and prosecution of all offenders who henceforth abuse the police uniform without applying for, and being duly issued a permit letter.

The statement reads, "The Nigeria Police Force has expressed concern over the incessant and unauthorised possession and use of Police uniforms and accoutrements by some individuals, movies and skit makers, as well as the illegal sale of Police materials and accoutrements by traders in shops, open stores not approved nor recognized by Police authority.

"The IGP has equally frowned at the demeaning manner in which movie makers and skit makers portray the Police institution in their movies and skits, using the police uniform without recourse to the provision of Section 251 of the Criminal Code law, and Section 133 of the Penal Code Law which criminalise such unauthorised use with accompanying necessary sanctions.

"The IGP, therefore, charged all commands and formations,

the IGP Monitoring Unit, Provost marshals and X-Squad, to arrest and immediately prosecute, in accordance with the law, all persons or groups of persons engaging in the illegal sales of police uniforms and accoutrements within their jurisdictions, while film or skit makers who portray the Nigeria Police Force officers in bad light, without applying for, and being duly issued a permit letter for such portrayals, to desist with immediate effect or face the full wrath of the law.

"The IGP further reiterates the commitment of the Force to guaranteeing compliance with law, as the Force Public Relations Officer has been charged with the task of ensuring prompt authorisation for all applications for approvals of usage of police items in movies, in tandem with the extant laws and which will portray good values, impress positively on the Nigerian public, add value to our system, provide police officers with modern innovations to actively carry out policing duties and on-screen role models who would influence their lives and career; and consequently improve security mechanisms in Nigeria.

"The Inspector-General of Police strongly believes that such sanity in movies production, regulation of sales, possession and usage of police uniforms and accoutrements will definitely impact positively on resuscitating moral values, and correcting wrong perceptions and ideologies towards commissioning of crimes in our society. It is obvious that this step will surely curb proliferation of Police kits, uniforms and accoutrements and eventually reduce police impostors-induced crimes in our society."

Siemens mega transformers to arrive Nigeria in September

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

If feelers from the presidency are anything to go by, the first batch of mega transformers ordered by the Federal Government under President Muhammadu Buhari's Presidential Power Initiative (PPI) are expected to start arriving Nigeria in September this year.

This followed as indications emerged at the weekend that the transformers have successfully undergone a factory acceptance test at Siemens' transformers factory in Trento, Italy.

Managing Director of the Federal Government of Nigeria's Power Company (FGN-Power), Kenny Anuwe, who led a delegation that included engineers from the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), witnessed the factory acceptance test conducted on Thursday, July 28, 2022, in Trento Italy.

The *Trumpet* learnt that the factory acceptance test had paved the way for Siemens Energy to commence the delivery of the transformers to the country, a move aimed at resuscitating Nigeria's energy crisis and abysmal of the power sector



Engr. Abubakar D. Aliyu

performance over the years.

This was revealed by the Minister of Power Engr. Abubakar D. Aliyu, who led a delegation on visits to Siemens Energy factories in Berlin and Frankfurt in Germany in April of this year and held meetings with the senior leadership of Siemens Energy on the need to fast-track the delivery of the early orders that would kick start

the transformation of Nigeria's electricity.

"The successful factory acceptance test shows that Nigeria's engagement with Siemens Energy is on track. It also shows the Federal Government's commitment to addressing Nigeria's electricity challenges," he said.

Also in December 2021, the Minister of Finance Zainab Ahmed and Aliyu secured the approval of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) for a €63 million (Euro) to procure equipment to boost power supply under the Presidential Power Initiative (PPI), which first phase is expected to provide 10 mobile power sub-stations and 10 mega transformers that would be deployed across the country to boost and stabilise electricity supply.

Earlier in 2018, President Buhari initiated the PPI to enable Siemens Energy to upgrade Nigeria's electricity systems, the first phase of which seeks to modernise, rehabilitate and expand the national grid by investing in the electricity value chain, including generation, transmission and distribution systems across the country.

Coup, illegal seizure of power not solution to Nigeria's problem – Prof Olupona

By PAUL MICHAEL

Professor Jacob Olupona, a Nigerian-American Professor of African Religious Traditions and American Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University, has said coup d'état



Jacob Olupona

and illegal seizure of power will not address the current problem of Nigeria.

Prof Olupona spoke at the 16th annual Faculty of Dentistry conference, held at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, with the theme 'Dentistry without borders.'

The professor expressed worry over the unemployment rate of graduates in Nigeria, saying it is a major crisis facing the country.

He advocated for cultural revolution as a way forward to address problems of transparency, accountability and bad governance facing the country.

"We have a crisis in Nigeria, we have people carrying certificates all around, they have no job, it is not their fault it is the system that has failed them. So, those of us who are responsible for this learning process must begin to think about how best we can help these students.

"The kind of social revolution we need is not using coups or using

guns but cultural revolution so that we begin to believe in ourselves, we begin to know when people are deceiving us and telling us stories and lies," he said.

Also speaking during a discussion session, Professor of Archaeology, Adisa Ogunfolakan lamented the lack of record keeping of teeth that has been removed by dentists in Nigeria so as to proffer solutions to problems associated with teeth.

He said, "No record keeping on teeth that have been removed by dentists in the past generations to see the nutritional changes. Dentists must work with historians, this will help to generate data for action plans.

Earlier, the host, Dean, Faculty of Dentistry, Professor Morenike Ukpong disclosed that the conference started with six pre-conferences and had nine national and international resource persons with 690 participants from multiple locations in and outside the country.

Alleged threat to abduct President Buhari, joke taken too far, says group

By ISAAC OLAMIKAN

The Coordinator of Masses Eye, a sociopolitical group, Comrade Samson Momorin, has warned that the alleged threat by bandits to kidnap President Muhammadu Buhari is "a joke taken too far and should be condemned by men of goodwill."

Momorin said, "the recent threat allegedly made by miscreants masquerading as bandits that President Muhammadu Buhari would be their next victim is a joke taken too far and all men of goodwill should be united in

condemning it.

"The Presidency is Nigeria's symbol of authority and power. If miscreants or at the best a rag-tag army/bandits threaten that symbol of authority and power, it needs no special order from whatever quarters to deal with such braggarts with maximum force.

"If we recall that in recent times the bandits have in their acts of bravado attacked military men and even highly secured military facilities. We should not take their threat lightly.

"Thus taking them out should not be a subject of debate or be

used by politicians to make mockery of our security apparatus. The security of all sections and even people is a collective duty of all and sundry."

Comrade Momorin stressed that getting it right in the 2023 general elections is the only way to address the myriad of problems that Nigeria is currently facing.

"The way out of all these is by ensuring that our vote is cast for the candidates we are certain will take us out of the woods and lead us on the path of buoyancy. We cannot afford to suffer another year of the locust. This is our chance."

Crying with Tobi Amusan: Nigeria shall win Las Las

By FEMI ADESINA

The week began on a dolorous note. Gloomy, sepulchral. Early Sunday morning, a ghoulish video began to make the rounds, in which abductors of the train passengers held since March 28 were being brutally beaten up, with their captors threatening fire and brimstone against everyone in the country. It was a very sad spectacle.

A cocktail of other negative stories cascaded out. Police station attacked in Ondo, cop killed. Bandits kill many in Kaduna, Taraba, Plateau. Later in the day, we heard of bandits attacking troops of the Guards Brigade, with three soldiers dead. And the Nigerian Labour Congress, in the midst of it all, was threatening to shut down the country in sympathy protests with the striking academic staff of universities. It never rains, it pours.

But however overcast the sky may be, the ravaging clouds are not always completely victorious. They don't possess the entire sky. You always see streaks of light. That blistering light came from Eugene, Oregon, United States of America, where the World Athletics Championship, was taking place.

Nigeria's Tobi Amusan, 25, had won Gold in 100 meters hurdles, setting a world record in the process. In fact, she had set two records within 90 minutes, first in the semi-final race, and then in the final. But the second was deemed wind-assisted, as the speed of the wind was above the legal limit.

Oluwatobiloba Ayomide Amusan had done what Napoleon couldn't do. She had won the first ever Gold medal for Nigeria in a World Athletics Championship. The flag of Nigeria was fluttering proudly in the global skyline, and our National Anthem was resonating melodiously. What a great time to be Nigerian, a breath of fresh air in a country being asphyxiated by bad news from every corner.

Tobi Amusan had burst into the limelight in 2013, when she won Gold at the African Youth Championships in Warri, Delta State. She performed the same



Tobi Amusan

feat in 2015 at African Junior Athletics Championships in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. But she was nowhere near where she was going yet.

In November 2016, she had posted on Twitter: "Unknown now, but I will be Unforgettable. I shall persist till I succeed."

Yes, that's the spirit. She needed to persist till she would get to the very top, reminding me of the memory work my school principal father gave all his children when we were young: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again." He got us to repeat it so many times, till it became ingrained in our psyche.

Tobi fell just short of the mark in some global competitions over the past couple of years. She would end in fourth position, till

she described herself as the "almost girl." She finished 4th at the Championships in Doha, and at the Tokyo Olympics. Her words: "I was the 'almost girl.' I got fourth, fourth, fourth. Now I finally did it."

Yes, she did it along with long jumper, Ese Brume, who also won Silver medal at the Championships. An elated President Muhammadu Buhari described them in superlatives, extolling them for bringing honor to motherland.

I watched Tobi Amusan as she climbed the dais to be invested with her medal. Besides herself with joy after crossing the finishing line ahead of others (who wouldn't?), she was a perfect picture of calmness. The Gold medal was emblazoned round her neck, followed by the National Anthem.

The song wafted forth, with that look of wonderment on the face of the new champion. When it got to; "the labour of our heroes past, shall never be in vain, to serve with heart and might..." lo and behold, Tobi began to cry. As the tears streamed down her face, I was surprised to see myself crying with her. And unabashedly too.

This was our country standing tall in the comity of nations. Our country, not a zoo. Our country, beleaguered, besieged, but not broken, indeed, unbreakable, and being celebrated. Nigeria we hail thee. Our own dear native land. Tobi cried, and I cried along.

The English writer, William Cowper (1731-1800), was the one who looked at his country, and exclaimed:"

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still-My country."

Nigeria, with all thy many faults, I love thee still-My country.

Was I ashamed of my secret tears? No. As Charles Dickens wrote in Great Expectations, "Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of the earth, overlying our hard hearts. I was better after I had cried, than before-more sorry, more aware of my own ingratitude, more gentle."

May we always be aware of our ingratitude to this blessed but blighted country. And may we be more sorry, more gentle. Nigeria shall win over all her adversaries. Las las. Amen.

•Adesina is Special Adviser to President Buhari on Media and Publicity

Anxiety as INEC suspends voters' revalidation and card transfer in Delta

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**, Asaba

There is growing anxiety amongst the eligible voters that are yet to complete their registration for Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) that empowers one to perform their civic responsibility during elections as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has said it is not going back on the July 31st, 2022, deadline for the termination of the ongoing Continuous Voters Registration (CVR).

Prior to the expiration of the deadline for the exercise, there has been last minute rush by eligible voters to INEC's main and franchise offices to get themselves registered. When The Trumpet visited some of the INEC offices in Delta State, long queues were still observed despite the creation of franchise offices and engagement of Adhoc staff across the state to address the large turnout that were overwhelming the workforce of the electoral umpire.

Currently, staffers of the electoral body are returning all those who have visited their offices for revalidation of voters cards and transfer of voting points, to give full attention to those for fresh registration. One of the affected voters, Ojo Butunde, who spoke to *The Trumpet*, said he was returned back, that

there was no problem with his registration despite explaining to the attending officer that he wanted to transfer his voting point from his home state, Adamawa to Ughelli where he now resides to enable him to exercise his franchise.

According to data released by INEC on Monday, 25th July 2022, Delta State stands at number three in the whole federation in terms of completed new registrations with a total of 481,929 registrants. However, despite this position, there seem to be hundreds of thousands that might just end up being disenfranchised in the state unless something urgent is done by both the government and the electoral umpire.

Reacting to the development, the Delta State Coordinator, Transition Monitoring Group, TMG, Pastor Edewor Ogedegbe, absolved INEC of any blame for failing to capture aspiring voters. He argued that a whole year, with an additional one-month extension was more than enough time for any serious individual to get him or herself registered.

He said, "For me, INEC has done their best so far. This programme started in June last year, it is only recently people became more interested and you also discovered that there was an extension in the quest to get more people registered.

The court also has empowered INEC to determine when they can stop their process. So they have given a window of 31 days, which will end tomorrow and the chairman has said they are no longer going to extend it. So for me, INEC is within the law, it is within the act that established it to determine when to end it.

"I think people should be more serious when civic responsibility props up at any time. I was at the INEC office yesterday; the crowd was huge but they are trying as much as they can. So tomorrow, next tomorrow, those

that are not able to get captured when the next dispensation comes they should try.

"The lesson to learn is that next time when any process begins, people should take advantage and not wait till the dying minute. It is not totally true that people came out and were not captured, the system is now electronic and no longer manual when you can register anybody. The process needs to run through, and that is not the problem of INEC. I don't want people to put a negative narrative there, for us as Transition Monitoring Group, we have been following up for upward of like four months now and INEC have been doing their best, I must say that.

"Citizens most times are very impatient with the system because they always want it to be done their way and once it is your way, it may be going contrary to the laid down rules. And that is the problem we have in the society. We are saying, allow the process to evolve, the electoral act has clearly backed up, that, we are going electronic and not manual. There will be network for the process to run through so people have to be patient. That is part of patriotism, if you can't do it today, go back tomorrow, Nigerians are not ready to give back to the country, they are only interested in what the country wants to give to them."



INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu

Edo attracts ROK Studios to Victor Uwaifo Creative Hub, churns out 18 movies in 6 months

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**

Edo State Skills Development Agency (EdoJobs) has said partnerships with movie studios such as Rok Studios, in the country have created a steady pool for movie productions in the state with filmmakers leveraging facilities at the Victor Uwaifo Creative in Benin City.

In an interview with journalists, the Managing Director, EdoJobs, Mrs Ukinabo Dare, said, through partnership with ROK Studios, Governor Godwin Obaseki-led administration will continue to boost skills of Edo youths in film making.

She said 18 movies have been produced in the state through the partnership with established studios.

She said, "The vision of the Edo State Government is to make Edo State a hub for Nigeria's creative industry. With our partnership with ROK Studios, a total of fifty movies will be shot in the state by the end of 2022.

"The partnership kicked off with the training of over one hundred and fifty (150) residents of Edo State on the needed creative skills in scriptwriting, cinematography, and sound engineering.

"Edo State is becoming a choice location for film and television production. Our plan is to attract the entire film industry to the state. This will expose budding talents in the creative sector to the most important stakeholders and veterans in Nollywood and provide them with the opportunity to participate and compete favourably in the filmmaking industry.

According to her, Between January and July 2022, eighteen movies have been shot in Edo State. These movies include the popular television series - Blood of Enogie - and others including Uwaoma, When God Says Yes, Kissing Frogs, Atonement, Home Coming, Out of Sight, Etebite, The Secret.

Others are: Filling Station, Family House, Love Happens, Osariemen, Osifo, Red Ribbon, International Mistake, Thicker Than Blood and An Odd Love.

She noted that "some of these films have aired on local and international stations and have featured Edo people in the creative sector actively engaged as part of the cast and crew.

"The beneficiaries of the training were actively engaged in the production of these movies."

Governor Diri pledges support for unifying festivals

By **AHERHOKE OKIOMA**, Yenagoa

Bayelsa State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, has said his administration will continue to support festivals that promote unity and the cultural heritage of the people across the state. He stated this on Saturday when he graced both the Obunem Epie New Yam Festival in Yenagoa Local Government Area and the Odi Ogori Ba Uge International Festival in Odi, Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Area.

He described the Obunem Epie Festival as an avenue to unite the people and to pass on the rich cultural heritage of the kingdom to the youths that do not understand their tradition. Diri, who assured the people that his administration would embark on more developmental projects in the kingdom, said since the creation of Bayelsa

State in 1996, the area had experienced exponential growth and development.

He listed some projects of his administration in the area to include the completed biggest media complex in the country, which is the Ernest Ikoli Media Complex. Other ongoing projects, according to the

governor, are the ultra-modern transport terminal at Igbogene, the Gloryland Drive-Onopa Road, the Igbogene-Elebele Road, the building of new secondary schools at Yenizue-Epie and Igbogene as well as completed renovation of the Azikoro Health Centre among other projects.

The governor appreciated the Epie people for their peaceful disposition and for supporting his administration since its inception, adding that the state can only develop when the people are united. Diri said: "This is an avenue to unite our people, for our people to come together and to pass on the oral tradition of this age-long festival and ceremony.

"There are a lot of youths that might not understand our culture and heritage. In this event, there will be a rich display of our culture and heritage, and it will continue to move from one generation to the other. I thank the people of Epie Kingdom for their overwhelming support from when this government started. Together, we will join our hands and develop our land, particularly Yenagoa, our state capital, which is the mirror of our state."

Chairman of the festival planning committee, Dr Alalibo Sinikiem, appreciated the people for sustaining the festival since the maiden edition in 1958. Dr Sinikiem noted that the festival serves as an avenue to unite the people and as a platform to generate ideas for the development of the kingdom. He called for the inclusion of more cultural programmes to make them richer and more impactful.

Sinikiem, who is the Resident Electoral Commissioner in Edo State, also appealed to the state government to sustain the festival through funding. While acknowledging the improved infrastructure in the kingdom, he appealed for more human and capital development through the commencement of the empowerment scheme and the embankment of the Epie Creek to enhance the socio-cultural and economic well-being of the people.

Speaking at Odi, Governor Diri described the Ogori Ba Uge festival as a symbol of the liberation of the community and commended the people for preserving it through the annual celebration. He said his administration had recognised

the festival in the tourism calendar of the state and approved annual funds for it.

"For us as a government, we will continue to support festivals of this kind in the state. This festival has been recognised in the tourism calendar of Bayelsa State. So, annually, I approve funds for it. There is nothing wrong with taking the festival to international levels. While doing that, we must not forget our indigenous culture.

"This festival is not all about the killing of a buffalo. Rather, it is more about the liberation of a people. A people and a community that was taken over by a supernatural being. It affected a lot of lives and the community decided to liberate itself."

Former Speaker of the Bayelsa State House of Assembly and member representing KOLGA Constituency 1, Dr Tonye Isenah, applauded the governor for the developmental projects embarked on Odi and also for appointing several persons from the community into his cabinet.

The high point of the event was the unveiling of the buffalo and hunter statues by Governor Diri as part of the proposed Odi museum.

2023: 600 PDP, APC supporters join Accord Party in Abia

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE

About 600 supporters of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC) supporters, from Ukwa East and Ukwa West Local Government Areas of Abia State, have joined the Accord party (AP) ahead of the 2023 general elections.

The decampers assured of their total support towards ensuring that the Accord Party take over the next government in the state.

The defectors from the two local government areas were led

into the fold of the Accord Party by Chief Chibuzor Imo and Mrs Nwanyiom David, respectively.

Speaking during the event held in Ukwa Local Government Area of the state, at the weekend, the leader of the PDP defectors, Chief Chibuzor Imo, hinged their move on the worsening condition of affairs in the State and lack of people-oriented policy by the ruling Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, in Abia State.

According to him, "it is not hidden that the ruling PDP in Abia State has failed in all indices to improve the welfare of the populaces in the State.

"It's indisputable fact that the citizens are facing hardship, hunger, poverty, penury, and these are as a result of the lack of well-defined and development-oriented templates by the PDP-led administration in enhancing the poor standard of living and affairs in Abia.

"We join Accord Party at this remarkable electioneering period, as the only alternative that can foster and provide the needed dividends of democracy to every doorstep of the Abia masses, and we are saying come 2023, we will work harder and collectively to effect a change

in the number one political leadership of Abia, and join other like-minds to vote in an effective and responsive government for the general good of Abia people and the State".

On her part, Mrs Nwanyiom David, lamented the height of insecurity and joblessness in the State and the country at large, assuring the State leadership of the Accord Party that all members and women within and outside Ukwa East and Ukwa West Local Government areas in Abia would fight for freedom.

Gov Umahi wins APC Ebonyi South senatorial ticket, defeats 4 other aspirants

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE

Governor of Ebonyi State, Engr. David Umahi on Sunday won the Ebonyi South senatorial zone tickets under the All Progressives Congress (AP) for the 2023 election.

Umahi's victory has put to rest controversies surrounding who is the authentic candidate for the zone.

He defeated Chief Austin Umahi and 3 others to emerge the winner.

Governor Umahi scored a total of 250 votes to defeat his closest rival Chief Austin Umahi who scored 10 votes to come a distant second in the primary election.

3 other women who stood for the Senatorial Primary Election in the zone include, Princess Ann Ago-Eze who scored Zero vote, Nwakaego Chukwu who scored 5 votes while Mrs Ibiam Margaret scored 3 votes.

Announcing the result of the election which took place at the Afikpo North Local Government Council Headquarters, the Chairman of the electoral panel, Prof Adebayo Kehinde declared the Ebonyi State Governor winner of the election.

"I Prof Kayinde by the powers bestowed on me by the National Working Committee of the Party, I declare as follows, the total number of voters, 285, accredited votes, 270 votes, votes cast, 275, number of valid votes 268 while invalid votes are 7 votes.

"I do hereby declare that Mr David Nweze Umahi having scored the highest votes is hereby declared the winner of the primary election for Ebonyi South Senatorial zone".

The election which was held amidst tight security witnessed the presence of policemen, men of the Nigeria Security, Directorate of State Security Service, DSS and Civil Defence Corps NSCDC and officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC.

In his acceptance speech, the Ebonyi State Governor Chief David Umahi and the winner of the election commended the electoral panel for the peaceful and transparent conduct of the primaries.

He also commended the delegates for the confidence reposed on him and assured them that the All Progressives Congress APC will emerge victorious at the forthcoming general election come 2023.



Gov. David Umahi

Voters' apathy mars Ebonyi LGAs Elections Umahi lauds transparent process

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE

The Local government election conducted by the Ebonyi State Independent Electoral Commission (EBSIEC), on Saturday recorded low turnout across the 13 council Areas and 171wards of the state.

Our Correspondent who monitored the exercise in some polling booths in Abakaliki, Ebonyi, Ohaozara and Afikpo areas people were seen going about their normal businesses.

Speaking after casting his vote at the Onuofukuru Umu-naga Uburu polling booth, Governor David Umahi

commended the peaceful council election.

Umahi lauded the EBSIEC for the early commencement of accreditation and voting at the respective polling units, he also commended the Electorates for turning out in their numbers to exercise their right of franchise.

"I can say that I am quite satisfied with what I have seen and the reports I am getting from across the state.

"It is very peaceful, the turnout is quite impressive and the people are voting very freely for candidates of their preferences.

"There is no other political

party in Ebonyi State, we have done quite well and no other political party in Ebonyi can boast of any reason why anybody in Ebonyi should vote for any party other than APC.

"We have performed, we have transformed the State, so Ebonyi people will not listen to promises, they are going to be listening to promises fulfilled under my administration.

"I worked hard for it. Apostle Paul says I have run the race, I have kept the faith, left unto me is the crown of righteousness, that crown of righteousness is a

comprehensive victory today.

"Every election is selection; an opportunity for the people to select whoever they like and that is the definition of election."

He expressed hope that with what his administration has put on ground in terms of infrastructural development, All Progressives Congress (APC) Candidates would carry the day in the various wards.

The Governor called on voters to continue to conduct themselves properly to ensure a hitch free exercise.

The election was generally peaceful across the State.

SERAP asks Buhari to withdraw BBC, Trust TV sanction threat in 48 hours

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has urged President Muhammadu Buhari to “urgently instruct Mr Lai Mohammed, Minister of Information and Culture to withdraw the threat to sanction the BBC and Daily Trust over their documentaries on terrorism in the country, whether through the Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) or any other agency of government.”

Mohammed had last Thursday stated that the Federal Government would sanction the BBC and Trust TV for airing documentaries that allegedly “glorify”, “promote”, and “fuel” terrorism and banditry in Nigeria.

In a letter dated 30 July, 2022 and signed by SERAP deputy director Kolawole Oluwadare, the organization said the media has the duty to impart information and ideas on issues of public importance, saying that if carried out, the threat to sanction the BBC and Daily Trust would inhibit the media from reporting on issues of public interest and lessen the flow of diverse viewpoints and information to the public.

According to SERAP, Media houses and journalists ought to be given the room to determine how best to present information of public interest, especially information about the growing violence and killings across the country.

The organization further said that rather than punishing the media for promoting access to diverse opinions and information



President Muhammadu Buhari

on issues of public importance, the Buhari government should focus on delivering her promises to ensure the security of Nigerians.

The letter read, “We would be grateful if the requested action is taken within 48 hours of the receipt and/or publication of this letter. If we have not heard from you by then, SERAP shall take all appropriate legal actions in the public interest.

“A free, uncensored, and unhindered press or other media is essential in any society to ensure freedom of opinion and expression and the enjoyment of other rights. It constitutes one of the cornerstones of a democratic society.

“Sanctioning the BBC and Daily Trust would be entirely inconsistent and incompatible with Nigeria’s obligations under article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and article 19 of the International Covenant

on Civil and Political Rights.

“The threat if carried out would impermissibly restrict the constitutional and international rights to freedom of expression, access to information, and victims’ right to justice and effective remedies that are central to public debate and accountability in a democratic society.

“Access to information is essential for the enjoyment of other human rights and freedoms and constitutes a fundamental pillar for building a democratic society and strengthening democracy.

“Allowing the media to freely carry out their duties is essential to building secure society and leaving no one behind. Conversely, imposing impermissible restrictions on media houses, journalists and other Nigerians undermines the security that builds a healthy and vibrant society.

“The grounds for sanctioning the BBC and Daily Trust as stated by Mr Mohammed fail to meet the requirements of legality, necessity, and proportionality.

“The requirement of necessity also implies an assessment of the proportionality of the grounds, with the aim of ensuring that the excuse of ‘glorifying, promoting, and fuelling terrorism and banditry’ are not used as a pretext to unduly intrude upon the rights to freedom of expression and access to information.

“Any interference with the constitutional and legal duties of the BBC and Daily Trust would not be justified in the context of the right to information.

“The Federal Government has not shown that the documentaries by the media houses would impose a specific risk of harm to a legitimate State interest that outweighs the public’s interest in the information provided by the documentaries.

“The documentaries by the BBC and Daily pose no risk to any definite interest in national security or public order.

“It is inconsistent and compatible with the Nigerian Constitution 1999 [as amended] to invoke the grounds of ‘glorifying, promoting, and fuelling terrorism and banditry’ as justifications for suppressing freedom of expression or withholding from the public information of legitimate public interest that does not harm national security.

“It is contrary to both the Nigerian Constitution and international standards to threaten or punish journalists and media houses such as the BBC and Daily Trust for disseminating such information.

“The vague and overbroad definitions of ‘glorifying’, ‘promoting’, and ‘fuelling’ raise concerns that the threat by the Federal Government if carried out would unduly interfere with the rights to access to information, and disproportionate to any purported legitimate governmental aim. Ill-defined and/or overly broad grounds are open to arbitrary application and abuse.

“The broad definitions of what may constitute ‘glorifying’, ‘promoting’, and ‘fuelling’ also heighten concerns of overreach, confer far-reaching discretion on the government, and suggest that the grounds cited by the Federal Government are more intrusive than necessary.

“These words do not indicate precisely what kind of individual conduct would fall within their ambit.

“The use of these words by the Federal Government, given their opaque and ambiguous meaning, leaves open the possibility for application beyond unequivocal incitement to hatred, hostility, or violence. Such words may function to interpret legitimate reporting by media houses, journalists, and other Nigerians as unlawful.

“The grounds cited by the Federal Government for sanctioning the BBC and Daily Trust also fail to establish a direct and immediate connection between the reporting by the media houses and any risks to national security and peace.

“The threat if carried out would also create an environment that unduly deters and penalizes media houses and journalists, and the reporting of government wrongdoing more generally.

“The cumulative effect of any attempt to sanction the BBC and Daily Trust would be the gagging of the media from reporting on cases of violence and killings by terrorists and kidnappers, the reporting and information that is clearly in the public interest.

Bawa seeks attitudinal change, collective actions against corruption

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Abdulsheed Bawa has called for practical attitudinal change and collective actions as preventive tools in the fight against economic and financial crimes.

Bawa made the call in Abuja while delivering a Keynote Address at the Chatham House African Programme Conference with the theme, “Towards Collective Action On Corruption In Nigeria: Linking Evidence and Practice in Support of Attitudinal Change”.

The EFCC boss admitted that issues of economic and financial crimes have caused reputational damage to Nigeria and Nigerians across the world but acknowledged the bold, decisive and far-reaching efforts of the government in breaking the strongholds of the crimes in the land

According to him, “behavioural and social norms are the drivers to our daily response to issues, which collectively impacts society, either positively or otherwise.

“This audacious task of government is exhibited in the clear political will to

deal with the issues frontally. To show its understanding of the problem, the government came up with the mantra; if we don’t kill corruption, corruption will kill us.”

Bawa, who advocated a multiple-pronged approach to solving the corruption problem, pointed out that the EFCC has always employed such a mechanism in addressing the menace of economic and financial crimes.

“The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, is conscious of its mandate and the need to adopt multiple approaches in its fight against corruption, money laundering, economic and financial crimes. These approaches revolve around the brick - and - mortar surveillance, investigation and prosecution processes and mechanisms that centre on attitudinal and behavioural changes that can serve as preventive tools in the fight against this malaise,” he said.

The EFCC boss also advocated the use of social media to push for more vigorous citizen engagement in the fight against corruption.

He said, “We must look beyond the traditional approaches to citizens’ engagement and extend to new frontiers, such as the digital space. Social media offers a delicate but

helpful outlier for participation by citizens in the fight against corruption.”

While highlighting the success of the EFCC in previous years, Bawa said, “The Commission set yet another record of convictions in 2021, where it recorded Two Thousand Two Hundred and Twenty-Two (2220) convictions, representing a 127.5 percent improvement over the 2019 record. The 2021 conviction record represents a 98.49 percent success rate in prosecution, as the Commission lost only 34 cases during this period.”

He urged Nigerians to take active interest in the affairs of the agency through the whistle blowing policy of the government while pushing for accountability of the anti-corruption agencies by demanding for more appropriate counter measures against graft.

The Conference paraded a cream of accomplished professionals, including Dr Alex Vines OBE, Managing Director, Ethics, Risk and Resilience and Director, African Programme, Chatham House; Professor Olatunde Babawale, Provost, Anti-Corruption Academy of Nigeria (ACAN), and Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, among others.

AGF Malami asks U.S to extradite journalist over alleged defamation

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, has requested the extradition of journalist, Azuka Jebese from the United States embassy over alleged defamation and cyberstalking of billionaire, Ned Nwoko.

This was contained in an extradition request dated June 27, 2022, with reference CAU/EXT/175/21, signed by Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Head, Central Authority Unit, and

titled “Request for the Extradition of Azuka Jebese in a Case of Cyberstalking from the United States of America to Nigeria.”

“I am directed by the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice of the Federation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to present his compliments and forward the attached request for Extradition to Your Excellency for onward transmission to the United States of America Department of Justice,” the request read.

Nwoko in July 2020 sued the U.S.-based journalist who accused him of complicity in

the murder of one Ogoto Blessing.

In a Facebook post, the journalist claimed that Mr Ogoto’s corpse “was found floating inside the pool” of a building that belonged to the former lawmaker.

He further accused the sacked lawmaker of using his wealth and influence to stall the investigation of the matter.

In reaction, Nwoko filed a lawsuit alleging defamation of character and demanded N2 billion damages including a “public apology to be published by the defendants in at least two national daily newspapers circulating in

Nigeria and social media platforms.”

Nwoko claimed that the defamatory publications in several online blogs and other social media platforms were aimed at denigrating his reputation.

Meanwhile, in a similar extradition matter, the Nigerian government had yet to accede to the request of the U.S. government to hand over embattled and disgraced Deputy Commissioner of Police, Abba Kyari, who allegedly connived with international fraudster, Ramon Abbas, aka Hushpuppi to defraud a Qatari businessman of millions of dollars.

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1 x 2	12,448.80	13,382.46	1 x 2	11,294.45	12,141.54	1 x 2	9,174.94	9,863.07	1 x 2	7,573.97	8,142.02	
2 x 2	24,941.96	26,812.61	2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09	2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64	2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03	
3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85	7 x 3	128,456.43	138,090.67	7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21	10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02	
9 x 2	112,183.69	120,597.47	7 x 4	158,608.73	170,504.38	7 x 4	145,965.10	156,912.48	14.5 x 2	124,915.92	134,284.61	
9 x 3	168,358.90	180,985.39	7 x 5	198,260.25	213,129.77	7 x 5	182,500.19	196,187.71	5 x 3	56,804.77	61,065.13	
10 x 3	187,065.45	201,095.35	8 x 2	90,633.42	97,430.92	8 x 2	73,399.58	78,904.54	6 x 3	68,170.86	73,283.67	
14.5 x 2	260,395.00	279,924.62	8 x 3	135,950.22	146,146.48	8 x 3	125,871.78	134,674.05	7 x 3	79,526.68	85,491.18	
8 x 4	199,536.48	214,501.71	8 x 4	181,266.93	194,841.95	8 x 4	167,043.40	179,022.80	8 x 3	103,375.58	111,130.80	
9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23	6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41	
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	269,911.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90	
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44	8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082	
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74	9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68	10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22	
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57	9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71	14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73	
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08	9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88	
9 x 5	404,061.37	434,365.97	9 x 6	367,065.92	394,595.86	9 x 6	337,805.68	363,141.11	7 x 5	141,001.98	161,793.93	
10 x 5	448,957.08	482,628.86	10 x 3	169,651.36	182,375.21	10 x 3	156,602.81	168,348.02	8 x 5	172,116.65	185,025.40	
11 x 5	493,852.78	530,891.74	10 x 4	226,258.00	243,176.28	10 x 4	208,808.58	224,469.23	9 x 6	278,649.91	299,548.66	
9 x 6	484,873.39	521,239.16	10 x 5	354,037.54	380,590.16	10 x 5	325,815.11	349,966.25	11 x 5	295,636.20	317,808.91	
10 x 6	538,748.49	579,154.53	10 x 6	424,845.04	456,708.42	10 x 6	390,978.13	420,320.48	11 x 6	340,573.10	340,466.08	
11 x 6	592,622.16	637,068.82	11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01	11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37	HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89	
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FP 14.5 x 6	560,500.00	602,537.50	14.5 X 2	197,128.09	211,912.70	14.5 x 2	151,178.45	162,516.84				
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Confronting inflation in Nigeria: what options?

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Inflation Report of May 2022 released in Abuja recently, Nigeria's inflation rate increased to 17.71 percent on a year-on-year basis in May. This is worrisome. This is not an abstraction. Buyers and sellers are groaning because of the biting inflation. Salary earners are hard pressed into making difficult choices. The purchasing power of the naira is woeful. The naira has depreciated over 100% in the last five months. What are the options for the Nigerian government?

The implication of a high inflation rate in any society is far-reaching and damaging. It impacts negatively on wage earners whose emoluments are usually systematically eroded and devalued by the high cost of goods and services. This may snowball into labour crisis in a country. Inflation means more money chasing fewer goods and services. It follows that a society experiencing inflation is operating as a consumer rather than a producing economy. Such a society is import-dependent.

By the time President Muhammadu Buhari ends his tenure in 2023, Nigeria will have enjoyed twenty-four unbroken years of democratic governance. The current government gave hope of "change" during the campaigns that successfully brought her to power. But the question is: have things changed for the better? The inflation index is usually used by economists to appraise the government's economic performance. If we go by the current index, the obvious conclusion is that the government of Nigeria has failed woefully.

Our country is gradually slipping into what is called run-away inflation. That a high Court of competent jurisdiction could fix the salary of the Chief Justice of Nigeria at N10 million, is an indication of how worthless the Naira may be. This is not the time for blame trading but to call on all relevant bodies as well as

the Nigerian Economic Society to find a way out of this economic quagmire. This should be urgently done!

Two major sectors that must be immediately addressed are the power and energy sectors. It is shameful that no government under the People's Democratic Party that ruled Nigeria, and produced three presidents – Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007); late Umaru Yar'Adua (2007-2010); and Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015) – in 16 years was able to build a new refinery in a country that ranks number five in the crude oil production in the world. The electricity sector is not different. It is a sector used to "cash out funds" by corrupt politicians and public servants. Goods produced in Nigeria are uncompetitive due to the high

cost of production. High cost of power and energy negatively impact the cost goods in Nigeria.

It is also a thing of shame that a country with a population of over 200 million people would depend on food importation. Government must come up with an agricultural Marshall Plan, even if it means engaging the NYSC as an agricultural intervention corps until the country becomes self-reliant in food production. The food crisis has been further exacerbated by attacks from bandits and terrorists as well as outright dislocation of farming communities.

Be that as it may, the inflationary trend in the country is the source of stress, depression, and mental health problems for many citizens. Ghana is witnessing protests from its citizens due to the high cost of goods and services. The government of Ghana recently went into an agreement with organised labour unions in the country and increased the wages of workers; agreeing that the "Cost of Living Allowance (COLA)" will be paid at a rate of 15% of base pay from July 01, 2022. The Nigerian government should be proactive by taking concrete measures to arrest the ever-increasing inflation.

There are many other measures government must take in order to assuage the pains inflation has brought on the average income earner. Government should provide more houses for low-income earners. There should be constant expansion and improvement of mass transit for the public. The burden of the unemployed on family members and other relatives who are working should also be reduced since high "unemployment" means many people are idle and not productive. Government must protect local industries, encourage the establishment of new productive firms and promote a "buy Nigeria" culture. Capital flight in the form of health and education tourism must be checked. The time is nigh for this government to put some forms of austerity measures in place. A stitch in time saves nine.



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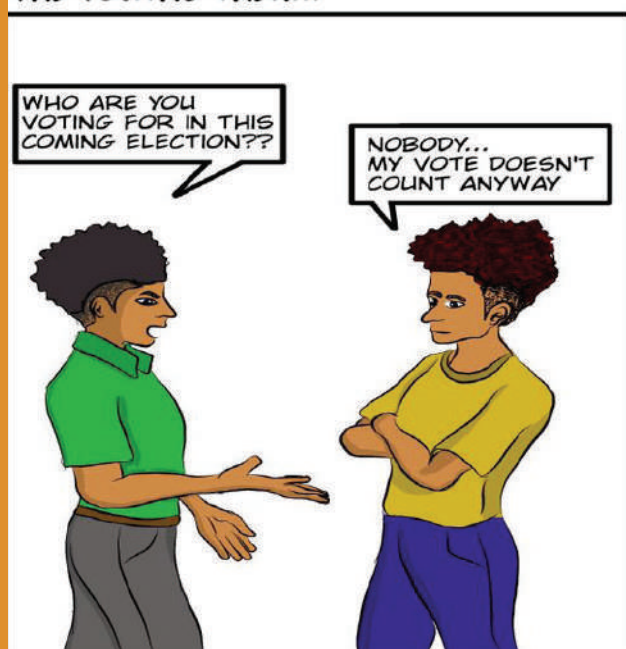
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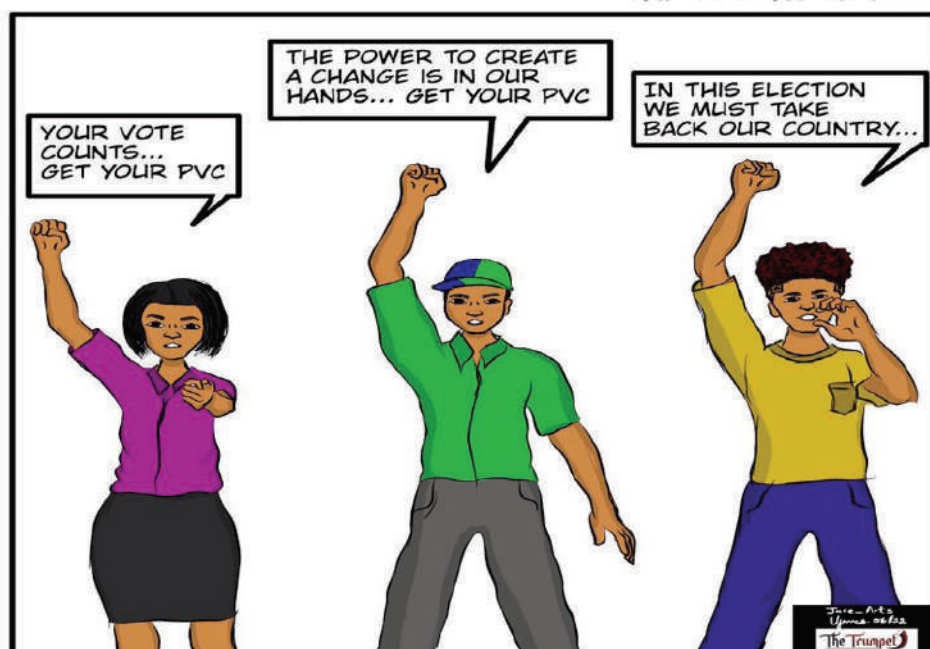
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THE YOUTHS THEN...



THE YOUTHS NOW...



Conversation Nigeriana (2)

Oreva: Hehehehehe! This handshake has gone beyond the elbow!

Okoro: Who is having a handshake with you beyond the elbow?

Oreva: The President is looking for a long stick to kill the snake!

Okoro: Is that what you were referring to? The President is NOT looking for any stick, short or long!

Bishak: You are so charitable, unnecessarily charitable with the Man in Aso rock.

Iyortem: How so?

Bishak: The President is not even aware that there is a snake inside his house; so, looking for a long stick does not arise at all!

Bankole: It's an open secret isn't it? The president is unaware of his environment!

Oreva: That cannot be true. How is he able to lead the country?

Bishak: Is he leading the country? He is not even following the country, not to talk of leading it!

Okoro: We are in serious trouble in that case!

Bishak: Are you just coming to that conclusion? Last week, the scoundrels who attacked Kuje Prisons and the train between Abuja and Kaduna threatened to abduct the President and Kaduna State governor. The cheek of it! Bandits threatening to kidnap the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed forces of Nigeria! The President is yet to issue a statement or give an order that the band of thieves should be arrested!

Bankole: To make matters worse, Kaduna State governor El Rufai says that one week after the threat was

issued, the President had not been briefed, or he was not aware of the threat! Buhari didn't get to know until El Rufai told him about it!

Iyortem: This is unbecoming! Most unacceptable! What are the security men doing? How could they not have briefed the President?

Oreva: It is possible they didn't take the threat seriously!

Okoro: Or the president forgot the details of the briefing!

Bishak: Not possible fa! No one briefed him. My worry is that the Army High Command or the DSS did not make a counter statement. No order was given to arrest the scoundrels. What exactly is going on?

Iyortem: Good question. What exactly is going on in the country? Is the conspiracy theory that the federal government wants to cede Nigeria to Muslim fundamentalists true?

Bankole: Preposterous! That's palm wine bar talk, please!

Bishak: That cannot be true. If those extremists take over Nigeria (God forbid) nobody, including all current office holders will be safe! So, perish that thought!

Iyortem: Why then is the president lukewarm on the issue of terrorists? Why has he not gone after the terrorists who have made life unbearable in Kaduna and are now threatening the federal Capital Territory?

Oreva: Are you aware that federal government colleges in the FCT have been closed down? S

Bishak: They sent a threat letter to Law School in Bwari in the FCT. The soldiers who were deployed to keep guard were attacked.

Bankole: there is something sinister about a national army that refuses to attack or dispel a band of thieves and terrorists who are assembled to wreak havoc? Is there a subsisting order that the Army should not attack the scoundrels except they are attacked?

Okoro: As far as I am concerned, if the Nigeria Army wants to kill the terrorists, it will be achieved within a week. But there is a reluctance to attack them.

Bishak: Although I usually don't agree with the Little Man of Kaduna, on his suggestion that they locations of the terrorist be bombed I am in total agreement. If a band of scoundrels, armed to the teeth are planning to launch an attack, you go after them. Period! Decimate them.

Iyortem: That is common sense. Pragmatic! Sometimes, I remember a statement credited to Citizen Buhari when he declared that any attack against Boko Haram is an attack against the north. Is he still persuaded thus? Does he still want to protect men who almost wiped out his advance team only three weeks ago?

Oreva: I was happy when some senators developed the balls to move for Buhari's impeachment on account of his failure to deal with the security situation. Almost unbelievable to hear 'All we are saying, Buhari must go' in the hallowed chambers of the Senate! I wonder what woke them up from slumber.

Bankole: The future of Nigeria is at stake. All persons in power at all levels must remember that they are in office in trust and must take the correct decisions. To place individual interests above the

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national one is selfish and dangerous to the survival of the country.

Okoro: Right now, Nigeria is like a woman being ravaged by different men until she will have no flesh left to entertain anybody. Stealing is going on right left and centre. We no longer speak of stealing in percentages. Whole sums are which are budgeted for projects are carted away by individuals. For a government that came to power on the platform of anti-corruption fight, it is a double tragedy, an irony of gargantuan proportions. These old men in power who have a short time left on earth should not be allowed to toy with the destiny of millions of youths!

Iyortem: Feeble old men running a nation with a population that is predominantly youthful; indeed some have put it at 70%. Everyday thousands of youths besiege embassies struggling to leave Nigeria. Even the professionals among them have given up in despair. Doctors and IT specialists are escaping from Nigeria before the house collapses! The United Kingdom is bursting with Nigerians who are doctors, nurses, health

care assistants, postgraduate students and IT professionals.

Bishak: These are persons who ought to be in Nigeria to help grow the economy. But with the free fall of the naira against all international currencies, any Nigerian working abroad is a king in naira terms.

Oreva: Yes oo. Seven hundred naira to the dollar! There is no effort to stem the fall. The politicians are busy spending dollars in Nigeria to further devalue the naira!

Okoro: The latest is to blame the NNPC for refusing to remit dollars to the federal government! Who is in charge of the economy?

Bankole: Who is in charge of Nigeria?

Oreva: The President says he is tired!


Bishak: Then in the words of Arewa Consultative Forum, he should just resign and go!

ALL: Yes, Mr. President should resign and just go!

Bishak: Chikena!

• Professor Eghagha is a member of The Trumpet's Editorial Board

By
Eric TENIOLA



Cont'd from last week Wednesday

The policy, organization and administration of the Nigeria Police Force and all other matters relating thereto (not being matters relating to the use and operational control of the force of the appointment, disciplinary control and dismissal of members of the force) shall be under the general supervision of the Nigeria Police Council. 13. The President shall cause the Nigeria Police Council to be kept fully informed concerning the matters under its supervision and shall cause the Council to be furnished with such information as the Council may require with respect to any particular matter under its supervision. 14. The Nigeria Police Council may take recommendations to the Government of the Federation with respect to any matter under its supervision, and if in any case the Government acts otherwise than in accordance with any such recommendations it shall cause a statement containing that recommendation and its reasons for acting otherwise than in accordance with that recommendation to be laid before the National Assembly".

And that is why Chief Rotimi Williams in his speech on November 1, 1977, did not include State Police creation when he presented his bill to the Constituent Assembly presided over by Justice Egbert Udo Udoma (21 June 1917 - 2 February 1998), who was the Chief Justice of Uganda from 1963-1969. The regimes of President Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari GCFR (25 February 1925 - 28 December 2018), Turakin Sokoto, Major General

Muhammadu Buhari GCFR (79), General Ibrahim Babangida (80) GCFR, Chief Ernest Adegunle Oladeinde Shonekan GCFR (9 May 1936 - 11 January 2022), General Sani Abacha GCFR (20 September 1943- 8 June 1993) and General Abdulsalam Abubakar GCFR (80) did not create state Police.

After his inauguration as President on May 29, 1999, President Olusegun Obasanjo GCFR then set up a Presidential Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution. The Committee was inaugurated on behalf of President Obasanjo by his then Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Chief Kanu Agabi (76). The Committee which was later headed by Chief Clement David Ebri (69) former Governor Cross River State, submitted its reports to President Olusegun Obasanjo GCFR on February 28, 2001, unfortunately the committee did not recommend the creation of State Police.

Prominent members of the Committee were Chief Ayo Adebajo, Chief Ayo Opadokun, Chief Barnabas Gemade, Chief A.K. Horsfall, Alhaji Iro Abubakar Dan Musa, Chief Arthur Nwankwo, Barrister Adeniyi Akintola, Chief Solomon Asemota (SAN), Mrs. Ayoka Lawani and others.

What the committee recommend was this "Two positions were canvassed by Nigerians on the desirability or otherwise of allowing States to establish and maintain their Police. Proponents of separate Police for the States rested their demand on the strong ground that it was consistent with federal practice. The arrangement, they argued, enabled the Federating States to effectively

The blunder in not having state police (4)

maintain law and order, especially during other social upheavals such as inter-communal riots, youth restiveness, riots and ethnic militancy without the often costly delays in obtaining Federal approval by the Commissioner of Police or a State Governor has so directed/requested. The handling of the various inter communal upheavals in the various states of the federation since the beginning of the current democratic governance left much to be desired. This, many people believe was due to the provision of Section 215 (4) of the Constitution which hinders a Governor from exercising his power as Chief Security Officer of the State.

Another example mentioned for the failure or weaknesses in the present centralized Police structure was the inability of the Nigeria Police to contend with the high rate of violent crimes which ravaged major towns all over the country. In response to the hostage-like situation in which the States were held by hoodlums, some State Governments have resorted to establishing Vigilante Groups which they claim have successfully dealt with the crime situation in those States. In some instances however, people often accuse these groups as some kind of local "militia" who would not hesitate to take the laws into their hands at will and molest people. The recent experiences in some parts of this country constitute sufficient lessons not to allow local "militia" to be formed. The Nigeria Police is however so badly equipped and unmotivated and so could not effectively deal with the crime and security situation in the country.

Representations against State Police bordered on the fear of abuses to which State Governors may subject their Police. These fears included those of intimidation and harassment of political opponents and perpetuation of electoral frauds. References were made to the experiences in the Country during the former Regional Governments when the authorities put the Regional and Local Authority Police to abuse - a development which led to occasional breakdown of law and order. The fall of the first Republic was partly blamed on the ignoble use of the Regional and local Police. It was, therefore, feared

that it 'Was too soon in the life of Nigeria's nascent democracy for the idea of State Police to be entertained. For this school of thought, it was argued that the need for State Commissioners of Police to occasionally clear operational instructions with the Inspector-General was intended to check abuses and ensure that the orders by Governors were actually lawful. What the Nigeria Police needed in order to function properly and serve Nigerians more effectively, was a retraining programme, proper funding and adequate and up-to-date equipment while steps should be taken to sanitise the institution and rid it of corruption and other vices. The Committee weighed the agitations for and against allowing States to establish their Police Force. Both sides of the argument have their merits and demerits. However, the

Committee notes that while the idea of State Police at some future date could not be wished away as Nigeria gradually matures in democratic governance, the prevailing situation today does not warrant the establishment of a parallel Police Force at the state level let alone at Local Government level. By so doing, there is the inherent danger of threatening the corporate existence of the nation. The Committee maintains that national stability and unity at all times should be the overriding concern of all Nigerians.

In view of the possible destabilising effect of having parallel Police at the State and Federal levels, the Committee recommends that the existing constitutional provisions as provided in Sections 214, 215 and 216 be retained. It however agrees that there is need for reorientation, reorganization and repositioning of the Nigeria Police to enable it meet the requirements of public order, public safety and democratic governance at all levels".

I could not believe what I read in Clement Ebri's committee's report. Even in the United States, the state police is a police body unique to each U.S. state, having statewide authority to conduct law enforcement activities and criminal investigations. In general, state police officers, known as state troopers, perform functions that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the

county sheriff (Vermont being a notable exception), such as enforcing traffic laws on state highways and interstate expressways, overseeing the security of the state capitol complex, protecting the governor, training new officers for local police forces too small to operate an academy and providing technological and scientific services. They support local police and help to coordinate multi-jurisdictional task force activity in serious or complicated cases in those states that grant full police powers statewide.

In many states, the state police are known by different names: the various terms used are "State Police", "Highway Patrol", "State Highway Patrol", "State Patrol", and "State Troopers". However, the jurisdictions and functions of these agencies are usually the same, regardless of title. Some agencies' names are actually misnomers with respect to the work regularly done by their members. All but two state police entities use the term "trooper" to refer to their commissioned members.

I am aware that Spain, Mexico, Indonesia, India, Germany, Canada, Brazil, Australia, Argentina and many countries have state police. And this has helped the security outfit of those countries.

Since 1999, we have been attempting to amend the Constitution but till today, we have not created state police. Since 1999, every deputy Senate President to date, Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu (2003-2007), Ike Ekweremadu (June 6 2007-June 11, 2019), Obansi Ovie Omo Agege (11 June 2019 to date) and deputy speakers of the House of Representatives from 1999 to date, Chibubom Nwuche (61), Austin Adiele Opara (58), Emeka Ihedioha (57), Yusuf Sulaiman Lasun (61), Ahmed Idris Wuse (58) have all been charged as Chairmen of various committees to amend the Constitution. Huge amount of money have been allocated for these exercise, we are yet to have state police included in the constitution.

The question now is, do we need State Police and is it desirable. Of course we do and it is urgently desirable. It is hereby advocated.

Concluded

Insecurity: Tinubu mulls decentralization of Police, jobs creation

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, has declared that he will tinker with the security architecture of the nation by decentralizing the police as a way to fight the nagging insecurity challenges that threatens the unity of Nigeria.

As part of agenda for Nigeria's greatness, the APC candidate is set to reduce inducement to criminal activities by creating jobs and employment opportunities which will in turn boost economic activities and place the nation on the track of prosperity.

According to a press statement signed by Bayo Onanuga, Director of Media and Communication of the Tinubu Campaign Organisation (TCO), if elected president come 2023, his administration will lead Nigeria to a new era of economic prosperity, peace, security and political stability.

Tinubu's vision for Nigeria is based on five thematic areas of improving security by decentralising the policing of the country and creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs simultaneously and transforming Nigeria into an enviable country where there will be justice, peace and prosperity for all, with a "robust economy".

Titled 'My Vision for Nigeria', Tinubu promised in the document, "a nation transformed into greatness, the pride of Africa, a role model for all black people worldwide, and respected among all other countries.

"A vibrant and thriving democracy and a prosperous nation with a fast-growing industrial base, capable of producing the most basic needs of the people and exporting to other countries of the world.

"A country with a robust economy, where prosperity is broadly shared by all irrespective of class, region, and religion.

"A nation where its people enjoy all the basic needs, including a safe and secure environment, abundant food, affordable shelter, health care,



Bola Tinubu

and quality primary education for all.

"A nation founded on justice, peace, and prosperity for all."

On economy, Tinubu promised to build an economy that will make the nation's Gross Development Product grow quicker annually for the next four years while also providing jobs for millions of youths in the country.

He also promised to launch a new National Industrial Policy focused on special intervention to reinvigorate specific strategic industries.

"I will focus on stimulating jobs, which will be my top priority as President. I will get Nigeria to work by launching a major public works program, a significant and heavy investment in infrastructure, and value-adding manufacturing and agriculture.

"My administration will build an efficient, fast-growing, and well-diversified emerging economy with a real GDP growth averaging 12% annually for the next four years, translating into millions of new jobs during this period," he said.

Tinubu also promised to create six new Regional Economic Development Agencies which will establish sub-regional industrial hubs to exploit each zone's competitive advantage and optimise their potential for industrial growth.

The presidential aspirant also promised to formulate a new National Policy on Agriculture to boost food production.

He promised to promote the establishment of new commodity exchange boards, while also strengthening the one in Lagos in order

to guarantee minimum pricing for agricultural products such as cotton, cocoa, rice, soya beans, corn, palm kernel, and groundnuts.

On infrastructure, Tinubu promised to "Build A New Nigeria (BANN)" by developing a National Infrastructure plan, which will cover strategic roads, bridges, rail, water, power, seaports, and airports spanning the length and breadth of the country.

He said his administration will combine government funding, borrowing, public private partnership, private sector financing and concession to initiate a medium and long-term financial model for the BANN initiative.

Tinubu further stated that his administration will target an electricity distribution goal of 15,000 megawatts across the country and ensure a sustainable 24/7 supply.

"On Electricity, I will embark on a renewed action-oriented focus and take immediate and urgent action on resolving existing challenges of power generation plants, gas purchasing, pricing, transmission, and distribution. My administration's critical goal is to have 15,000 megawatts distributable to all categories of consumers nationwide to ensure 24/7 sustainable supply within the next four years," he added.

On the oil and gas sector, Tinubu said there will be no need for a subsidy because the market will be open and transparent.

"Supply will come from local refineries, and the forces of demand and supply will determine the price of petroleum products.

"My administration will establish a National Strategic Reserve for Petroleum Products to stabilize supply during unexpected shortages or surplus periods. This will eliminate any form of product shortages and prevent wild swings in prices.

He promised to strengthen the education sector by increasing the spending on education to 25 per cent of the nation's budget, continue the free school feeding programme of the APC, feeding "millions of primary school children across the country" and eradicate strikes by tertiary institution workers.

2023 poll: Atiku sane, fitter, experienced than other candidates - Melaye insists

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Senator who represented Kogi West senatorial district in the 8th Senate, Dino Melaye has described the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar as most qualified among presidential hopefuls across parties.

He said the former vice president is more sane, physically and mentally fit and politically experienced than others having occupied the office of vice president of Nigeria in the past.

Melaye, who is one of the key lieutenants of Atiku in the 2023 presidential race said this on Saturday during the public declaration for Atiku and induction ceremony by the Diamond Ladies in Politics held in Abuja.

He specifically noted that there is no basis of comparing Atiku with the presidential candidate of the ruling All progressive congress (APC) Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

Melaye though admitted that the 2023 race will be a two way hurdle between Atiku and Tinubu while dismissing insinuated threat from the candidate of the Labour Party, Peter Oni.

He said neither Peter Obi nor Rabiun Kwankwaso of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) would spring surprises at the presidential poll.

"I am happy that everybody here is singing one son and that is Atiku for President. Many are already voting at the social media but INEC



Atiku Abubakar

have no voting centre at the social media. "Atiku supporters are real, they are original. You can see them and they have PVCs. We have two very important people contesting this election. Atiku Abubakar, the Wazirin Adamawa and Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the APC.

"Unfortunately both of them are very



Dino Melaye

wealthy but there is a difference. Atiku is a billionaire with enterprise while Tinubu is a billionaire without enterprise. Atiku is a billionaire with enterprise because he has a history of physical business in agriculture, education, oil and gas, media, manufacturing and banking.

"But the other side (Tinubu) have money

without enterprise. Atiku Abubakar Has met the constitutional requirements of the federal government that anyone who wants to contest for the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria must be physically and mentally fit. I cannot say same of the other person (Tinubu).

"At 75 what is new that Atiku would be looking for other than to set the pedestal for the upcoming generation to have a life they can call their own. So this competent Nigerian that is highly mobile and administratively sagacious is coming to change the narrative.

"Obi is a fantastic Nigerian but he was not known nationally until Atiku identified him. Atiku is a talent hunter. Everyone who was a reformer in this country between 1999 to date was a discovery of Atiku.

"Atiku discovered Obi before keyboard warriors discovered Obi. Unfortunately election are not going to take place on the social media. It is going to take place at the polling units. And those that would vote are the people here. So it is now operation votes must count.

"Out of all the presidential candidates, he is the only one with Presidential campaign experience. All of them are running for the office of the president for the first time. From Kwankwaso, to Obi to Tinubu and others. Atiku has led this route before. He understands it and he will emerge victorious by the Grace of God," Melaye said.

Am not part of Buhari's impeachment plot - Senator Sankara

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Senator representing Jigawa North West senatorial district, Danladi Sankara, a member of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) has dissociated himself from impeachment plot against President Muhammadu Buhari.

This is as the Minority Caucus in the Senate have started lobbying colleagues in the ruling APC to key into the plot to initiate an impeachment process against President Buhari if he failed to address the prolonged insecurity in the country.

The oldest senator in the 9th Senate, Adamu Bulkachuwa an APC member from Bauchi State staged a walk out with the minority senator on Wednesday to demand Buhari's impeachment.

Sankara, who is the Chairman, Senate Committee on information and National Orientation, Senator Danladi Sankara

confirmed a thick plan by some senators mainly of the opposition to unseat the Senate President, Dr Ahmad Lawan to pave way for eventual impeachment proceedings by the Senate against President Buhari.

Sankara refuted trending claims by certain online news publications linking him to the plot by some senators to impeach the Senate President.

According to him, he was neither consulted or coopted into such plan by the eleven other senators alleged to masterminding the plot.

He said " at no time was I consulted or coopted into such plan . It is just the figment of imagination of the online publications and the others who are linking me to such a move.

" I was present throughout plenary sessions of last Tuesday and Wednesday, nobody approached me or sought my

consent to join any move to impeach the Senate President or President Muhammadu Buhari"

Senator Sankara cautioned his colleagues not to play politics with the issue, saying the daunting insecurity challenges affects every lawmaker irrespective of party affiliation.

He pointed out that what is required at this time is maturity and understanding of leaders and people to ensure that Nigeria overcome the challenges of insecurity and economic downturn.

"It is very important for leaders to explore workable methods to address the issues of insecurity . It is not proper for us to further heat up the polity when we should put heads together to explore workable solutions to the issues of the economy and insecurity . It is a collective responsibility on the part of the leaders and the people " said Sankara.



Danladi Sankara

Purported defection plans: Lawan not sitting on defection letters of APC senators

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Amid rumoured plot by at least 20 senators of the All Progressives Congress (APC) to dump the ruling party, the Senate President has denied sitting on letters written by senators notifying the Red Chamber of their defection.

Lawan said it was not true that he deliberately kept the purported letters to protect his position as the President of the Senate.

This might not be unconnected with an alleged effort by the Senate President to save his coveted seat in the Upper Chamber by persuading the aggrieved APC senators to stay back in the ruling party.

The Trumpet gathered that 10 of the lawmakers refused to be pacified and might have forwarded their letters to the Senate

President.

The APC Senators include ; Adamu Bulkachuwa, (Bauchi North), Ladi Dadu'ut, (Plateau South), Bello Mandiya, (Katsina South), Ibrahim Oloriegbe, (Kwara Central), Danladi Sankara, (Jigawa West) and Sabi Aliyu Abdullahi, (Niger North)

Others are; Smart Adeyemi, (Kogi West), Yakubu Oseni, (Kogi Central),

Halliru Dauda Jika (Bauchi Central) and Lawal Yahaya Gumau (Bauchi South)

The Senate President, it was learnt after frantically talking to the APC lawmakers who are hell bent on jumping ship, deliberately held on to their defection letters till the Senate adjourned last week for a long vacation

But, apparently referring to a publication

alluding to the fact that Lawan was sitting on such letters, a statement from his media office categorically stated that the story is utter falsehood as there was no such letter before the Senate President.

Ola Awoniyi, Special Adviser(Media) to President of the Senate on Saturday said "obviously, the purveyors of the syndicated lies had not even bothered to confirm from the Distinguished Senator if and when he submitted any such letter to the Senate President.

"It is public knowledge that the Senate President has always promptly read out at plenaries letters by Senators defecting from one party to another.

"The Senate President is sufficiently knowledgeable about the rules and workings

of the Senate and has been discharging his responsibilities within the ambit of those rules.

" That is why he has continued to enjoy the confidence and full cooperation of his fellow Distinguished Senators irrespective of party affiliations.

"Apparently, some vested interests want to magnify challenges to sow seeds of discord in Parliament in promotion of their selfish agenda.

"We wish to reiterate that the Senate President is not withholding or sitting on any letter of whatever content from any of his Distinguished Senator colleagues.

"Therefore, any story purporting such exists only in the imagination of the mischief makers circulating it."

2023: Labour Party, PDP charge INEC not to compromise credible conduct of election

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Both the Labour Party (LP) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) have charged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to know that it's credibility is at stake in conducting acceptable elections in 2023.

The charge is on the heel of insinuations of alleged plans by actors in the political class to compromise the Commission ahead of the general election.

One of the national officers of the Labour Party and coordinator of a support group campaigning for Peter Obi presidency alleged of plans to rig out Obi even before the election by politicians who are terrified by the soaring popularity of the LP presidential candidate.

Speaking anonymously, he said that the Labour Party has latched on a thick plot to involve INEC staff and workers of communication network service providers to disenfranchise voters in catchment areas of the LP candidate, particularly in the South East and South South regions of the country.

Specifically, he said the Bimodal Voters Accreditation System (BVAS) machines are going to be tampered with and sent to strongholds of Obi in both S/ East and S/ South.

"The aim is that the BVAS machines will malfunction or work slower and drastic reduce the number of willing voters that will be accredited before voting proper commences. Thereby hundreds of thousands of Obi's supporters will be disenfranchised and his

prospect of gaining huge number of voters in those areas truncated.

"This can only be achieved in collusion with INEC and that is why we are warning the Commission not to fall prey to such plot to manipulate the system".

Part of the plots to deny Obi of acruable votes at the he poll, according to the Labour Party, include a deliberate plan to ensure that election materials arrive late in these areas

He said "the idea is to frustrate voters and ensure they get tired and retire. And at the end of the day a minimal percentage of registered voters will be accredited and allowed to vote, thereby disenfranchising a larger number of voters.

"We are going to plan ahead of such plot as we will educate voters, particularly our members to be on the alert and insist that all registered voters must be allowed to carry out their civic responsibility.

"We will ask then to go out with their foods and drinks and share with others. They should wait there even if it is midnight to vote and their votes must count. They should stay until the end of the whole exercise and ensure they have results sent immediately."

Finally, the LP chieftain send warning signals to operators and technicians in network service providing companies not to compromise their operations.

He alluded to a plan to lobby operators to deliberately tamper with network to ensure that frequencies are not strong enough in areas of strength for Peter Obi.

This, he said, "is to slow down network

to affect the functionality of BVAS and uploading of results immediately on INEC portal. This, he added "is to create room for manual recording of result which can be falsified or hijacked by hoodlums.

"We are also privy to information of plans to create violence in polling units with the end aim that INEC will cancel results of voting in such area in line with extant electoral laws."

Upon all the alleged plots, he said leadership of the Labour Party will address a press conference in which it will raise these issue and seriously warn INEC and network service providers not to yield to compromise.

On its own part, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) warned that INEC should be aware of it's responsibility to Nigerians to conduct acceptable elections in 2023.

The party admonished the Commission to replicate the INEC Candidates Nomination Portal (ICNP) which was successfully deployed at the recently conducted Osun State governorship election during the coming general election.

The PDP insisted that the deployment of the (ICNP) technology will ensure transparent, fast, credible polling and transmission of results in the 2023 general elections.

According to the party, the ICNP technology allows political parties to use specified and dedicated Access Codes issued by the Commission to log in and electronically upload the names and particulars of their candidates onto the INEC Web Portal in a manner that guarantees promptness, safety of materials as well as the integrity and transparency of

the submission process.

The PDP noted the effort by INEC to train Mobilization staffs of political parties for seven days; an initiative that played key role in the success of the ICNP process while urging INEC to organize more capacity building trainings for its officials ahead of the 2023 general election.

National Publicity Secretary, Debo Olo-gunagba said "our party believes that the success of the ICNP is a further pointer that technology can be effectively deployed to enhance the credibility of sensitive electoral processes such as rapid uploading, transmission, collation and final declaration of election results at all levels.

"The PDP, a critical stakeholder in the Nigerian Democratic System, applauds the deployment of technology in the electronic transmission of results in the Osun State Governorship election but urges the Commission to expand its capacity so as withstand the expected pressure in the large-scale transmission of results from across the country in the 2023 general elections."

The PDP therefore, charged INEC to ensure the security of its electronic system to prevent infiltrations and manipulations especially in the 2023 general elections.

"INEC must know that the process of the 2023 general elections is crucial to the people and Nigerians expect nothing short of free, fair, transparent and credible elections that will reflect only their expressed Will and aspiration to rescue our nation from the current misrule," the party cautioned.

Aftermath of PDP Presidential primaries: Wike opens up on crisis in party, says truth will prevail

By CHRIS EZEONOH, PORT HARCOURT

Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike on Friday said he would address Nigerians on the impasse in the opposition Peoples Democratic Party, (PDP) occasioned by the outcome of the presidential primaries and consequent choice of the presidential running mate of the party.

The governor who stated this on arrival to the state from Spain described as unfortunate the unguarded public comments credited to respectable party members against him after the conduct of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) presidential primaries.

Governor Wike maintained that the right thing such persons should have done, particularly the PDP presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar or the PDP national chairman, Senator Iyorchia Ayu, would have been to reach out to him, but they did not.

The governor who spoke to journalists at the international wing of the Port Harcourt International Airport pointed to how Alhaji Atiku Abubakar used the occasion of the unveiling of PDP vice presidential candidate, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State, and his appearance on a national television to lie against him.

"But there comes a time that people will understand and know the true facts. So, obviously, whether I will speak is not in doubt, to let Nigerians know the actual truth. Having known the truth, whatever they decide to do with it is left for Nigerians.

"Because, you can imagine, the presidential candidate of the PDP Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, when he unveiled the vice presidential candidate, no right thinking lover of this party would say that the speech he made on that day was fair. Forget about the favour seekers. Forget about the scavengers. But I never reacted to it. That is because this party belongs to all of us.

"Thereafter, he appeared on Arise Television, see the statement he made. So many lies were told and you said



Abubakar Atiku

I should not react to some of those issues. That would not be fair."

Governor Wike explained that after the PDP primaries he returned to Rivers State to focus on fulfilling the remaining promises that he made to Rivers people.

He said, already a number of completed projects have already been outlined for inauguration and when that was done, he would respond to all the lies peddled against him.

He said, "Assuming today, I'm not alive, obviously what they have said would be accepted as the truth. Look at his (Atiku) attack dogs, Sule Lamido, Babaginda Aliyu, Maina Waziri. Look at the statements they issued. Look at the abuses they rained on me, but I never reacted.

"And Nigerians will ask, you mean these things happened? So, it is important that as a person and for my own future, and for those who rally around me to say, look, this is not fair. So, I will



Nyesom Ezenwo Wike

make sure that I will react to them, line by line, of the statements made by Alhaji Atiku Abubakar himself and his attack dogs."

Governor Wike asserted that he contested the presidential primary squarely and emerged in the second position so he will not tolerate being disparaged.

He emphasised on speaking to lovers of the party by putting the record straight so that they will know who is being truthful.

"Look at it, a presidential candidate who believes that he wants to win election, and somebody who contested fiercely with him that has never raised any issue. I just kept quiet, just minded my business, to see how my state can move forward.

"But every day, his people come up to attack me, to say one thing or the other. That's quite unfair and so I should let Nigerians know at the appropriate time,

that will be after the commissioning of projects that we have lined up.

"We will say look this is not correct, so that posterity, history will be on our side so that we have been able to keep the record straight. So, nobody should be in doubt whether I am going to speak on the issue of PDP, issues of the primaries and other related matters.

"Nigerians will know what happened, Nigerians will know those who love this country, Nigerians will know what went behind. And that is to assure you are going to speak on that."

Governor Wike clarified that Senator Bukola Saraki met with him in Spain, but said he was not sent by Alhaji Atiku, so nobody should think in such a direction.

The Rivers State Chief Executive wondered why Alhaji Atiku Abubakar who visited him at his place to solicit his support does not know the way to the house he once visited.

The Governor also said that he is not aware of any committee that has been set up by PDP or the party's presidential candidate to reach out to him.

"I want to tell members of the public, as far as I am concerned, I love this party, I have remained committed and I have been able to play my part. I'm not talking about leaving this party.

"I am not one of those who are running around the presidential candidate to say I want to be this. I am not one of those favour seekers, scavengers looking for how they will survive.

"After the commissioning of projects that we have lined up, we will be able to speak to Nigerians and tell them what happened. It doesn't matter who is involved.

"I am not a slave, and I will not be a slave, am a free-born of this country. I must be able to say how things are, whether it suits you, or it does not suit you, is immaterial.

"So, members of the public should please bear with us that we must put the records straight. If we don't put the records straight, history will not be happy with us", Gov Wike insisted.

I need donation to buy N15m Labour Party governorship form, aspirant appeals to Lagosians

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Lagos gubernatorial hopeful, Babatunde Gbadamosi has decided to raise fund to pay the N15 million fee for governorship nomination form of the Labour Party (LP).

Gbadamosi who contended for the governorship ticket of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) but lost out has dumped the PDP for the Labour Party.

He said the feasibility to contest the 2023 governorship election in Lagos State depends on ability to raise the fee for nomination through donation from people that wish he could be the next governor of the state.

He added that his hope of contesting was revived by demand by his numerous supporters to latch onto the opportunity provided by the Labour Party.

The politician took to his tweeter handle to appeal to his supporters to donate money to a dedicated bank account for the purpose of obtaining the LP form before the August 12th,

2022 deadline for final substitution of Gubernatorial candidates by parties.

He had earlier contested in the governorship race in 2011 and 2015 under the PDP platform. In both years, he failed to secure the party's ticket and lost to Ade Dosunmu in 2011 and Jimi Agbaje in 2015.

And in 2019, he contested the governorship election on the platform of the African Democratic Party (ADP) but lost to the incumbent governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu of the APC, after which he rejoined the PDP in 2020.

Gbadamosi in his tweet said "while it is true that Lagos needs rescuing from the clutches of those who have turned it into their ATM, it is true too that because of their looting of that ATM, the effort will be an uphill task that will require immense resources, from my personal experience," he wrote.

"At this point in time, having almost single-handedly contested two major elections back-to-back within two years in 2019 and 2020 (Gubernatorial and Senatorial bye-election), I'm afraid I'm

all tapped out

"I simply do not have the resources to engage in another electoral adventure, even if the odds seem to favour the Labour Party, provided they can present a solid, politically credible, articulate, knowledgeable, experienced & courageous candidate in Lagos right now."

"My political experience has taught me that you cannot rescue people who are not interested in being rescued. The only way I can believe Lagosians are ready for true freedom from the Jagajagabandits is when I see true commitment."

"I am told the Labour Party Expression of Interest and Nomination Forms cost ₦15m, and there is a fee for waiver, that could bring the total to up to N20m. INEC deadline for final substitution of Gubernatorial candidates is August 12th, 2022.

"If truly, you're interested in getting me to run, it is time to put your money where your mouth is, and go get me the Labour party form, because honestly, I really no get shishi to give."



Babatunde Gbadamosi

Engaging them young for UN Climate Action



Babajide Sanwo-Olu



Senator Gershom Bassey

By HENRY BASSEY

“I have learned that you are never too small to make a difference”- Greta Thunberg

About five years ago, I caught the bug of intentionally protecting the environment from a street cleanup campaign, which triggered a few lifestyle changes for me as I started with changing my antiperspirant to a roll-on, separating waste at home and in the office, planting trees whenever possible, designing eco-friendly campaigns, delivering ESG solutions for clients and teaching the next generation how to take climate action in a fun and exciting way.

All of these have resulted in adding a new sustainability feather to my cap and establishing a United Nations-endorsed climate education, advocacy and media platform known as the GreenHubAfrica Foundation (www.greenhubafrica.com), a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

The GreenHubAfrica Foundation is a strategic partner with the United Nations working closely with the Information Centre to, among other things, promote a trademarked Nigerian Climate Action Super Heroes avatars, through a series of initiatives, ranging from the ongoing GreenHubAfrica schools' outreach, the ongoing production of an animation series and branded content for web and TV, Children's Story Books, Comics, computer games, merchandising materials and a Joint show at the next UN COP27 happening in Egypt later this year.

The Climate Action Superheroes

were officially launched at this year's World Environment Day hybrid event organised by GreenHubAfrica held on June 6, 2022, and June 7, 2022, at the UN House in Abuja in partnership with United Nations Information. The event had global captains of industry in attendance and was opened by the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations (UN) in Nigeria, Mathias Schmale, as well as Chairman GreenHubAfrica Foundation and Director of Internationalisation at the London South Bank University, Prof. Obas John Ebohon.

Other keynote speakers are the Lagos State Commissioner for Education, Mrs Folasade Adefisayo; Director of Climate Change at the Federal Ministry of Environment, Dr Ini Obong Awe; Senator Gershom Bassey, Mrs Uche Onwuama; who represented the Minister of Education; Ace Comedian, Ali Baba; Senior Special Assistant to the Lagos State Governor on Education, Ms Adetola Salau; Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Natural Eco Limited, Dr Eugene Itua, Founder of FAFE International, Mrs Temitope Okunnu and Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of GreenHubAfrica Foundation, Henry Bassey, among others.

The event, among other things, rewarded the top performing school students, who participated in the GreenHubAfrica Climate Action Superheroes schools outreach contest. Their artistic entries were showcased as up-cycled products from skills acquired during the school's outreach.

It also unveiled for the first time the eight re-contextualised Nigerian Super Heroes in an animation format, which

showcased their exciting superpowers, to tackle our local climate challenges evident in increases in temperature, variable rainfall, rise in sea level and flooding, drought and desertification, land degradation, more frequent extreme weather events, affected fresh water resources and loss of biodiversity. The super heroes will be used to educate, entertain and engage our target audience to take climate action, through various GreenHubAfrica Foundation's initiatives.

Bassey further explained that the concept of climate action super heroes emanated from a UN comprehensive action plan developed by academics in New York, United States of America (USA) during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown to drive climate action among students. To this effect, the GreenHubAfrica Foundation designed a localised syllabus incorporating the Climate Action Superheroes to equip Nigerian students with practical knowledge and skills to address climate change and other local environmental challenges.

The Foundation has already engaged over 5,000 students in 13 schools across Nigeria and has just concluded the first school outreach in Lagos, powered by Sterling Bank at the Jibowu Junior High School, in partnership with the ministry of education where no fewer than 300 students have already been engaged with plans to extend to other schools in Lagos and other parts of the country.

On Thursday, July 21, 2022, six students namely: Opeyemi Olotu; Ramadan Iyanda; Ope Ayomide;

Confidence Jigba; Kehinde Fasinu and Hanatu Agatha, who demonstrated uncommon creativity, originality and innovation were unveiled as winners of our environmental and climate action superheroes class contest through their designs from disposable materials, following an intensive training organised for them by the GreenHubAfrica Foundation.

Of the six students, Hanatu Agatha, Kehinde Fasinu and Confidence Jigba emerged first, second and third best students and were awarded prizes by Sterling Bank PLC.

Senior Special Adviser (SSA) to the Lagos Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu on education, Ms Adetola Salau, commended the students, while Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of Sterling Bank, Dapo Martins, who lauded the programme, also revealed that the bank, through its Health, Education, Agriculture, Renewable Energy and Transportation (HEART) initiative, would continue to support the future of tomorrow in its quest for producing good leaders, seeing that the country needed sincere and accountable leaders for the future.

The event ended with planting ornamental trees at the Jibowu Junior High School. The growth of the trees and their performance would be monitored and if well nurtured, will contribute to the ranking of the school as a participant in the 2023 world environment day, National Climate Action Superheroes Schools contest, which will hold at the UN House, Abuja where remarkable climate action solutions from participating schools will be rewarded.



FBN Holdings gross earnings hit N359.2b in six months

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

FBN Holdings Plc has announced its unaudited results for the half year ended June 30, 2022 with gross earnings of N359.2 billion.

Its financial statement released at the weekend in Lagos indicated that the gross earnings increased by 22.4 per cent when compared with N293.4 billion recorded in the preceding period of 2021.

The bank also recorded a profit before tax (PBT) of N65.7 billion from N45.2 billion achieved in the corresponding period of 2021, amounting to an increase of 45.3 per cent, just as its profit after tax (PAT) for the

period stood at N56.5 billion against the N38.1 billion posted in the comparative period of 2021, representing an increase of 48 per cent.

Commenting on the result, Group Managing Director, Nnamdi Okonkwo, said the premier financial institution demonstrated resilient performance despite the challenging operating environment.

"FBN Holdings continues to demonstrate resilient performance despite the challenging operating environment with an impressive improvement in revenue and profitability. For the half year 2022, gross earnings and profit before tax grew by 22 per cent y-o-y and 45 per cent y-o-y to



Nnamdi Okonkwo

N359.2 billion and N65.7 billion respectively.

"Furthermore, we continue to see good progress across our performance metrics, which remain in line with our focus on driving sustainable growth. The Group remains committed in its transformation drive, which has resulted in stronger balance

sheet and better asset quality with non-performing loans closing at 5.4 per cent at H1 2022.

"Similarly, risk management capability remains robust across the Group supporting the drive for enhanced earnings for sustainable capital accretion," Okonkwo said.

He said the company would continue to deliver sustainable value to its stakeholders, adding: "Our strategic intent remains unchanged in optimising opportunities that drive growth in revenue, profitability, capital accretion and overall operational efficiency that delivers sustainable value to our stakeholders."

Also speaking, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of First Bank of Nigeria Limited, Dr. Adesola Adeduntan, said the commercial banking group remained focused on executing key initiatives to position the Group for improved profitability in FY2022, amidst a challenging operating and dynamic regulatory environment in the first half (H1) of 2022.

"Our half-year results further reinforced our drive toward our 'Quantum Profitability Leap' agenda. Our gross earnings are up by 22.6 per cent year-on-year to N338.5 billion and net interest

income up 49.3 per cent year-on-year to N152.9 billion.

"On the back of the impressive growth recorded in our top line, our profit before tax recorded a strong growth of 40 per cent year-on-year to N60 billion. Profit after tax also grew by 42.3 per cent year-on-year to N53.3 billion as the bank continues to reap the dividends of the successful restructuring of its balance sheet and revamping of our risk management architecture.

"We continue to record progress in driving down our non-performing loans ratio, which now stands at 5.4 per cent at the end of H1 and we are on target to bring it within the regulatory limit of five per cent by end of 2022," he said.

Adeduntan expressed the confidence that the current momentum of generating impressive returns from the quality risk assets portfolio already created would be sustained.

"We will continue to strengthen our dominant digital banking capabilities in providing best-in-class services to all segments of our customers across all our footprints in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond," he said.

WTO seeks more support for sustainable fisheries in developing, LDC nations

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has canvassed greater support for fisheries development in developing and Least Developed Countries (LDC), insisting that financial assistance must be expanded to help such countries to enable them to established sustainable fisheries in light of historic WTO Agreement to curb harmful fishing subsidies.

Director-General of WTO, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, stated this during an Aid for Trades Global Review event at the weekend, where the Secretariat of the global trade organisation unveiled a new report.

The event also featured top officials from coastal economies and donor partners, who expressed support for channeling more resources towards sustainable fisheries.

At our 12th minister conference, WTO members adopted a new agreement on fisheries subsidies. The agreement is the first broadly focused binding multilateral agreement on ocean sustainability and the first WTO agreement with environmental sustainability at its core.

Okonjo-Iweala used the opportunity to urge members to formally accept the agreement so that it can enter into force, stressing that for developing countries and LDC members, implementation would take time, effort and money.

She maintained that there were several tasks ahead, such as integrating fisheries related elements into subsidy policies and meeting new notification requirements, particularly on fisheries-related information.

"The WTO new report titled: *Implementing The WTO Agreement On Fisheries Subsidies: Challenges And Opportunities For Developing And Least Developed Country Members*, helps to set the context for this important conversation, Okonjo-Iweala said.

She also disclosed that 65 per cent of \$5 billion in assistance earmarked for fisheries and the ocean economy between 2010

and 2020 targeted sustainable fisheries according to data from the organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as presented in the report.

"One telling statistics from the report though, is that the assistance to sustainable marine fisheries over 10 years had been dwarfed by the annual \$22 billion in harmful fisheries subsidies.

"Eliminating these subsidies would in principle unlock a huge amount of resources that could be redirected to promote and support sustainable fisheries management and practices by all members including developing and LDC members," she stated.

She further explained that the move will draw attention to the voluntary WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism, which is captured in the agreement to fill gaps in existing assistance and thus ensure that beneficiaries have what they need to fully implement the new WTO rules.

The fund will be operated by the WTO along with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), adding: "Donors to the Fund already have pledged around half of our initial target of \$10 million, and we are to get it up and running quickly."

In his presentation, Ambassador Mere Falemaka of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and Ambassador Muhammadou Kah of the Gambia, affirmed that developing country members and LDCs will need assistance to implement the Agreement for example to meet notification requirements, to establish mechanisms to withdraw prohibited subsidies and to reform subsidy policies dispersed in various legislation.

Kah also noted that stock assessments and other features of fisheries management can be costly and will require immediate support, stressing that the agreement establishes several opportunities to change the status quo, contribute to ocean sustainability, contribute to the livelihoods of fishing communities and implement good practices.

Flour Mills of Nigeria delivers impressive performance in Q1 2022

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

Financial results released by the Flour Mills of Nigeria Plc has revealed impressive performance and growth of 45 per cent in the first quarter (Q1) of 2022 over its performance in the corresponding period of last year, as all segments namely: Food, agro-allied sugar and support segments witnessed an upsurge supported by volume growth and favourable mix.

It explained that the positive trend was boosted by increased penetration into new and rural markets, impacted by growth of breakfast cereals in the South East region, The Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja and implementation of innovative marketing strategies to serve rural markets.

It said the company continued to focus on investments in route to consumer redistribution resulting in 8,000 new outlets in Q1 of 2022 and launched new SKUs in the starch and fertilizer business segments and commenced operation of fertilizer blending plant in Kaduna with a 90 tonnes per hour capacity.

"Gross profits reached N33.2 billion in Q1 of 2022, up from N25.7 billion in Q1 of 2021

Honeywell Flour Mills Plc (HFMP) acquisition was completed in May 2022 and the transitional process resulted in an N1.1 billion deficit for HFMP and N0.4 billion one-off transactional costs for FMN, while earnings before tax growth net of transitional costs would have been 15 per cent compared to

the previous year.

"The Group is comfortable with the Honeywell investments and the long-term projections are very positive after having managed the operations since the middle of May.

"Flour Mills of Nigeria Plc remains committed to maintaining growth and sustaining profitability by increasing local content with further backward integration investments.

In its operational review, the company explained that it achieved the feat in spite of increases in prices of inputs in the food segment and continued solid performance in the Agro-allied segment following continuous penetration into new and rural market," it stated.

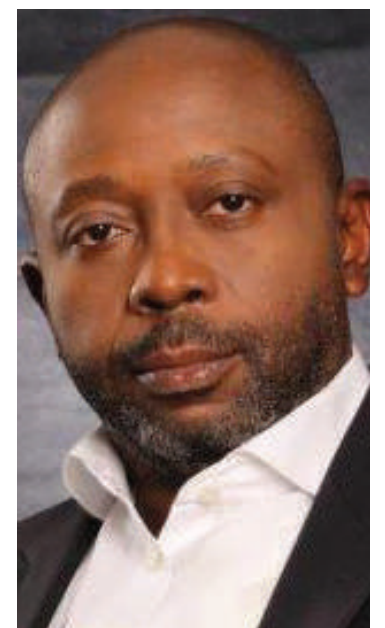
Management of FMN further explained that investment in route to customer redistribution and improved customer interface engagement resulted in N7.3bn Profit Before Tax (PBT), which increased marginally by 1 per cent on an absolute basis and 15 per cent on an operational basis when excluding the transitional costs.

"Our sugar segment witnessed a 64 per cent revenue with stabilised trading environments and strong demand for brown sugar which is locally produced at our farm in Sunti. Our animal feeds business attained 21 per cent revenue growth, driven by investments in logistics infrastructure and farmer training extension services across the country," it added.

Commenting on the results, Group Managing Director,

Omoboyede Olusanya, said: "Despite the challenging socio-economic environment, we continue to deliver strong business performance with resilience and operational excellence. Our increased operational efficiency with accelerated plans for our supply chain optimisation, content localisation, and cost optimisation across our business segments has helped to cushion the sharp rise in the cost of raw materials.

"We will remain committed to our purpose of feeding the nation everyday through our offerings of quality products and services. We are dedicated to achieving sector strategic growth opportunities, both organic and inorganic with keen determination as we continue to create value for our shareholders."



Omoboyede Olusanya,

OPEC posts 2.84mbd lesser oil production output in June

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Expectations that the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its coalition members can rapidly rise to the challenge of supply disruptions in the international oil market is beginning to fade as gaps between the groups output protections and actual barrel deliveries continue to deepen.

Output deficits relative to production target, become more worrisome even after Saudi Arabia boosted output amid struggles to repair its shaky relationship with the United States of America (USA).

Russia pumped more output as it seems to make up for steep price discounts, and Libya doubled its output to over a million barrels per day.

Despite significant production rise the 24 nations group started output recovery in late 2021, returning to Pre-Pandemic Production level has been difficult for the group, whose members have suffered gross exploration under investment and production declines.

Nigeria, a prominent member of OPEC, for instance, was unable to rise to its assigned output quota as

the group's compliance rate drops to lowest oil production, just as the oil group's underproduction rose to whopping 2.84 million barrels per day in June 2022 according to data corroborated by international market and shipping players.

Some of the OPEC group's delegates told news agency sources, the alliance suffered massive shortfall of 2.84 million barrels per day (bpd) in June between Actual Production and the target oil output level.

As OPEC releases its oil output, more members have been falling further behind their quotas due to a lack of capacity or investment in supply, consequently, the gap between nameplate-production per the agreement and actual production continues to widen.

According to the report of a survey conducted by Argus Media in the month of June, OPEC pumped over 2.5 million bpd more than 2.5 million bpd below its target in June, in spite of a rebound in Russia's oil production that helped the group's output rise by 730,000 bpd from May.

Russia's oil production rose in June and was approaching the levels last seen in February, just before the Russian invasion

of Ukraine, while most of the rebound was due to higher intake from domestic refiners.

The Trumpet reports that 10 OPEC producers pumped 24.8 million bpd of crude oil in June according to the organisation's data showed that in the monthly oil market report (MOMR) with production falling one million bpd short of the target levels.

Top OPEC producer, Saudi Arabia, naturally raised its crude oil production by the most in June compared to May.

OPEC's secondary sources stated that even the Saudi Arabia was even lagging behind their quota for June, adding that its oil production rose by 159,000 bpd to 10.585 million bpd and that to compare the figures, Saudi Arabia's target was 10.663 million bpd, so the kingdom was 75,000 bpd below its quota last month according to figures from secondary sources.

OPEC is expected to continue to under-performed compared to its production target for July and August after the group decided to accelerate the rollback of the cuts and have those completely unwound by the end of August.

Already, Libyan Production is back on track and production

rates in country have surged above one million bpd, almost doubling month-on-month less than one week after the Tripoli government lifted the blockade of oil ports and infrastructure.

Oil output had more than halved since the middle of April, as

the increase followed an agreement with protesters and tribal heads on the need to reopen fields and export terminals that had been largely shut since mid-April, but before the resumption, production was down to 560,000 barrels per day.

Treepz wins 2022 best African industrial tech company global startup award

Treepz, a shared mobility platform, which uses technology to make transportation predictable, structured and accessible for Africans has emerged the 2022 best industrial technology company in Africa at the just concluded Global Startups Awards, which held in Cape Town, South Africa recently.

Treepz emerged winner above 7,500 companies from 54 African countries that competed for the award.

Speaking at the event, co-founders of Loud Hailer and GIIG, Jo Griffiths and Caitlin Nash said: "We know that a lot of those solutions sit here on the African continent. We believe that we can unlock Africa's growth a lot faster and position it as the tech continent of the future, with these proof points over a few years time."

In 2021, the Global Startups Awards expanded into Africa with focus on finding the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aligned technology innovation solutions with 55 countries competing in 12 categories, including agricultural technology, health technology, industrial technology and women in technology.

"This year, some winning startups will get funding for their social, environmental or economic impact on the African continent in three areas, while endorsements will continue to help Treepz to contribute its fair share to the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) making cities more resilient and sustainable," he said.

In the last three months, alone, Treepz has effectively saved planet earth 519,792 KG of Co2 emissions across Nigeria, Ghana and Uganda, as a result



Jo Griffiths

of passengers sharing rides with Treepz-powered vehicles instead of drive their individual cars.

Treepz is one of Africa's leading shared mobility startups and has established itself with close to 10,000 daily rides completed on its platform.

As the company begins its 60-day countdown to three wholesome years, it is important to note that Treepz has achieved remarkable milestones in bookings within 30 months of operations and expanding to Ghana and Uganda with the acquisition of Stabus and Ugabus in both countries.

Today, Treepz has the number one market share in Ghana and Uganda in less than a year in both countries and was also one of the few startups to receive government approval for its operations in Lagos, while recently closing out state partnerships to expand across the African continent.

NIMASA promotes 469 employees, appoints three new directors

It was excitement galore among senior members of staff and the rank and file of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) at the weekend, as the board and management of the agency approved the promotion of 469 employees and appointed

three new directors.

In a statement issued by the Head of Public Relations Department of the agency, Osagie Edward, the newly appointed directors are Otonye Obom, Captain Umoren Sunday Michael and Kazir Abubakar Musa.

The directors were promoted along with 18 deputy directors and 20 assistant directors, while 431 other staff members were elevated to their next grade levels in a promotion exercise that was ratified during a meeting at the governing board at the NIMASA headquarters in Lagos

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, congratulated the affected members of staff and charged them to remain committed to the agency's vision of making Nigeria great through sustainable harnessing of its huge maritime potential.

He said: "Congratulations to the 472 staff of the agency whose promotions have been ratified by the NIMASA Governing Board. It is my expectation that this development will serve as a morale booster, as you collectively rededicate

yourselves to the delivery of our core mandate.

"We remain dedicated to ensuring that welfare is at the forefront in order to encourage the hard work and dedication that our staff members are known for is maintained and built upon going forward. Suffice to say that the promotional exercise was rigorous to ensure our high standards are maintained.

"On our part as executive management, we will continue to ensure that staff promotions are conducted as at when due as part of commitment to human capacity development in the agency, thereby ensuring positive contribution to the nation's economic diversification drive," the statement reads.

Jamoh stated that the agency governing board enjoined the newly promoted staff to be more dedicated to their duties, saying that promotions come with added responsibilities.

It would be recalled that the promotion exercise is the third under the Jamoh-led management since he assumed office in March 2020.



Dr. Bashir Jamoh

MTN Nigeria assures of readiness for 5G services

MTN Nigeria's biggest Mobile Network Operator (MNO) based on the number of subscribers on its network is ready to launch commercial Fifth Generation (5G) network service this month of August.

Chairman of MTN Nigeria, Ernest Ndukwe, who disclosed this at the weekend in Lagos, during the Titans of Tech Awards, organised by Tech TV said: "MTN Nigeria is ready for the commercial launch of 5G Service in Nigeria by this month of August."

In his remarks at the event, Ndukwe, who was former Chairman of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)

told participants at the event that MTN Nigeria was one of the two winners of the two 100 MHz TDD slots of the 3.5 GHz band for the deployment of the 5G network in December 2021.

He said the two companies were given a letter of the award by the Nigerian Communications Commission between August 12, 2022 and August 24, 2022 for commercial roll-out of the new system.

MTN had in 2019 done a trial launch of the 5G Networking in Abuja and gave Nigerians the assurance that they would get the full benefits derivable from the deployment of 5G in the country.

NAICOM issues new directives to insurance firms on MDAs

The National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has restated its commitment to focus on two-pronged policies to make government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to transfer assets to insurance companies for adequate cover and sanity for the sector, irrespective of whose ox is gored.

NAICOM's new position is a paradigm shift from the paddle along mode to the present well positioned and focus on policies aimed at steadily erasing the MDAs' records of poor patronage of insurance policies and creating an industry suitable for the risks it was mandated to protect.

Deputy Commissioner for Instance (Technical), Sabiu Abubakar, made NAICOM's position

known recently at a forum of the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), noting that the new phase of regulation was already being implemented and there are policies in the works to reinforce the commission's new direction.

While establishing the commission's distinct Lever Push in the regulators perspectives, Abubakar, who represented the Commissioner for Insurance, Sunday Thomas, said NAICOM has almost finished work on guidelines for cover of assets of MDAs with collaboration of Federal Ministry of Finance, Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) and Head of Service (HoS) of the Federation.

The coming guidelines, he stated, would require MDAs to insure

all assets and non-compliance would be sanctioned, adding: "It is worrisome to the commission that most assets and liabilities of government are never adequately and appropriately insured, which further accentuated the need for urgent measures to be put in place by the commission to ensure that government gets value for money in the purchase of insurance by MDAs."

"Recently two insurance companies' licences have been withdrawn and these are Niger Insurance and Standard Alliance Insurance. Though managing the death and failure of financial institutions is very demanding, nevertheless more may still be liquidated in order to sanitise the industry," he added.

Abuja Terror Attack: How terrorists dislodged army, killed captain, four others – Insider's Account

By PAUL MICHAEL, DEFENCE EDITOR, ABUJA

Facts on how terrorists attacked military officers of the 7 Guards Brigade and soldiers of other Battalions last Sunday in Bwari Council Area of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja have emerged.

In a leaked audio clip, a soldier of the 7 Guards Brigade, who was part of the operation, gave the detailed account of how the terrorists dislodged the soldiers, who included those from 177 and 102 Battalion in Keffi, killing no fewer than five. However, he said the soldiers killed about 12 terrorists and chased them from the entire area.

According to him, the terrorists, who were armed with Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and other assaulted weapons, ambushed and engaged the soldiers from all sides after they (soldiers) advanced into the bush without their RPGs, Gun Trucks, AA and GPMG due to obstruction caused by water and rocks.

The soldier, who said he was injured and receiving treatment at the National Hospital, stated that the terrorists had written the School of Law at Bwari Road that they would be attacking the school.

He said the school on receiving the letter immediately informed the 7 Guards Battalion.

He noted that the Brigade instantly mobilised to the school and started all round defence deployment. He further stated that there was contemplation that the terrorists may have plan B to attack another place, so they looked for the nearest prominent target that they may attack, which happened to be a University very close to the Law School, about 3.2 kilometre away.

"So, we also went there to create all round defence as well. We were there for over two weeks before the attack last Sunday," he said.

According to him, the terrorists, who were already in the bushes, knew the soldiers were already on ground but did not have the plan of engage them until they (soldiers) advanced into the bush to clear their (terrorists) doubt after observing torch lights in the bush.

"At night we were always observing torch lights in the bush, so we were wondering who could be there at that time of the night. Therefore, we asked the security men at the University if they usually see the torch lights at night, but they said no. When it was morning, which

was on Sunday, we have to advance into the bush. I was there in person.

"When we arrived there, we saw where they were smoking, where they cooked goat for food and also their tramol, so we confirmed that they were in the bush. Then we called for reinforcement and backup. They brought APC, gun truck, and Artillery team for us. So, we advanced into the bush, searching for them. This was on Sunday.

"Then we got to a place and there is water and some rock there, the gun truck could not channel through that particular road, so we parked them and that was why we had casualties to be sincere; we parked the AA, GPMG, the gun trucks because they cannot proceed through that route. We were with only our rifles and AK 47. We did not even carry RPG because we were thinking they will be only a pocket of enemy, like 20, 30 or thereabout.

"So, while we were inside the bush, we didn't know that they have seen us from a very far distance. So, they laid ambush waiting for us to penetrate, flagging us from left and right. The moment we got to their AOR, they engaged us and really engaged us. We lost four soldiers in my Unit and it was three Units that



Cheif of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Faruk Yahaya

went there – 177 and 102 from Keffi including my own Unit, 7 Guards Battalion.

"They dislodged us because they were fully prepared. They shell mortar and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) but we still managed to kill about 12 of them. On our

side, they killed one Captain, one Lieutenant and two soldiers in my Unit while 177 battalion lost one soldier and 102 battalion also lost one soldier," he stated.

He, however, said the soldiers got reinforcement and have completely dislodged the terrorists in the eras after engaging them fearlessly.

"But since that day, we have been dislodging them. We have had reinforcement and I don't think any of them is still in that bush again. They went through Kaduna route and we followed them. We later carry the Gun Truck through another route to block and engage them.

"They didn't have the mind to face soldiers. They knew we were outside for that two weeks that was why they didn't attack. If we were not there, they would have destroyed that school of law long time ago but they have to wait because they knew soldiers were outside and we mounted the place like it was our barrack since they wrote the school.

"We turned it to duty with 10 soldiers in each duty armed with rifles, AK 47 and gun trucks. It was because we went to the bush to clear their doubt that brought about the attack on us but they suffered it too," he added.

Kidnappers of Nollywood actors demand \$100,000 ransom

By PAUL MICHAEL

Kidnappers of prominent Nollywood actors and members of the Actors Guild of Nigeria (AGN), Cynthia Okereke and Clemson Cornel aka Agbogidi, who were kidnapped in an Enugu suburb days ago, have contacted their families, demanding for a \$100,000 ransom.

The actors, who are renowned for starring in movies shot in Enugu and Delta states, were reported missing after their family members confirmed that they didn't return home from a film location at Ozalla Town, Enugu State, on Thursday.

The AGN National President, Emeka Rollas, told journalists on Saturday that the kidnappers are requesting a lump sum in dollars as ransom.

Rollas said that the AGN is working closely with the families of the victims and the security forces to ensure their safe release. "The kidnappers have made

contact with the families and are demanding the sum of \$100,000. We pray to God for his intervention and for Him to put confusion in their midst.

"We are also working closely with the different security operatives, but we are not sure what to expect from them because the same thing is happening everywhere in the country," he said.

AGN's Director of Communications, Monalisa Chinda, broke the news of the kidnap of the actors in a statement made available to newsmen on Friday.

Ms Chinda said their kidnap had increased fear amongst members about the safety of actors filming in the country.

Meanwhile, the Enugu State Police Command has said it has launched investigation to unravel and locate the missing Nollywood actress, Cynthia Okereke.

Police Public Relations Officer of the state, DSP Daniel Ndukwe, made this known on Saturday in Enugu.

Ndukwe said the current report at the disposal of the Police dwells on a case of an abandoned and recovered vehicle, as well as one missing person.

He said the vehicle was abandoned and recovered at Four-Corners on Enugu-Port-Harcourt Expressway, precisely within Ozalla community in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State axis of the road.

"On July 29, at about 7:30am, we received information that a red-coloured Toyota RAV4 Jeep with registration number AGL 199 CY was noticed to have been parked in an abandoned way at Four-Corners on Enugu-Port-Harcourt Expressway.

"Hence, the location was visited and the vehicle recovered.

"Coincidentally, at about 11:30am, on the same date, a report was further received stating that the vehicle belongs to one Cynthia Okereke (f), a Nollywood Actress, who was last seen on July 26," he said.

Gunmen kill 3 policemen, 5 vigilante members in Kogi

By PAUL MICHAEL

Gunmen have reportedly killed three police officers and five vigilante operatives in Ajaokuta Local Government Area of the Kogi State.

It was gathered that the security operatives were killed while on the trail of some suspects, following a report at the Divisional Police headquarters by villagers that some people were using their farms for criminal activities.

Confirming the killings, the Security Adviser to Kogi Governor, Commander Jerry Omadara (rtd) said that the three police officers and five members of local vigilantes were killed in an ambush on Saturday.

Omadara said that a Divisional Police Officer (DPO), acting on intelligence report that hoodlums had invaded some farms and engaging in illegal activities, mobilised officers in collaboration with local vigilantes and headed for the area.

"They were, however, ambushed and in the process eight of them were killed – three Police Officers

and five members of the local vigilantes," he said.

Omadara, however, said that the state government will not rest until the culprits are brought to book.

He said that the state government under Alhaji Yahaya Bello has assured the people of the state of adequate government protection and Saturday's incident would not be allowed to repeat itself.

In recent times, attacks by gunmen have become rampant in Kogi state. On Tuesday men of the Nigeria Police Bomb Squad were hurriedly drafted to detonate an object suspected to be an explosive device found in premises of the office of the Secretary to the State Government (SSG) on Lugard road. The explosion created by the detonation of the object created panic in the area.

Also a leaked security memo by the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) on Monday listed Kogi State among six other States including the FCT that terrorists and bandits have earmarked for attacks in the country

Kwara police dismisses report, warns bandits, criminals to keep off state

By PAUL MICHAEL

Police in Kwara State has warned bandits and other criminals to keep off from the state, saying Kwara should not be seen as one of their bases.

Spokesperson of the Kwara State Command, Okasanmi Ajayi, served the warning in a statement made available to journalists on Sunday in Ilorin.

Ajayi in the said statement

dismissed as fake an intelligence report that some forest reserves in parts of Kwara have been taken over by bandits.

A reports had earlier claimed that bandits were ready to use the forests to launch attacks on Kwara and neighbouring states.

Responding, the spokesperson said, "The command wishes to state categorically that Kwara is safe and secured and no part of Kwara is

occupied by bandits or terrorists.

"The writers and sharers of that fake intelligence report are mischievous, desirous of sowing a seed of distrust and fear in the minds of the good people of Kwara in particular and Nigeria in general. "This is an attempt to create panic in the minds of peace loving Kwarans, but they have failed."

According to Ajayi, the State Commissioner of Police, CP Tuesday

Assayomo, had renewed police and other security agencies' commitment to the protection and the defence of lives and properties of residents.

"Aggressive and extensive patrols have been employed in the state, while vigilante groups and hunters have been co-opted in patrolling the forests and bushes.

"Consequently, the good people of the state are advised to give information to the police whenever anything

negative or sinister developments is being suspected around their vicinity," he added.

Meanwhile, residents of the state have been enjoined to go about their lawful businesses without fear of attack or intimidation.

Ajayi said that the command would not relent in regular patrols, intelligence gathering and raiding of black spots in conjunction with sister security agencies in the state.



Birmingham 22: Edidiong wins bronze medal in men's 67kg weightlifting

By **OVIRI KELVIN**, Sports Editor, Abuja

Edidiong Umoafia has won the bronze medal in the men's 67kg weightlifting in the ongoing Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

The feat attained by Umoafia was added to the medal haul by Team Nigeria after Olarinoye Adenike Adijat claimed a gold medal in the women's 55kg category.

Edidiong, in the course of clinching the bronze medal, lifted a total of 290kg comprising 130kg in the snatch and 160kg in the clean and jerk.

Team Nigeria weightlifters have started the crusade for a harvest of medals for

- Team Nigeria through to semi-final in table tennis
- Team Nigeria progress to quarter-final in boxing



the nation after being charged to finish the games on a remarkable note.

Edidiong, the studded weightlifter who hails from South-South region of Nigeria, was discovered in the

youth games organised in Akwa Ibom State.

Meanwhile, Team Nigeria in the men's table tennis event are through to the semi-final after defeating Malaysia 3-2 in Birmingham.

In the course of

battling to progress away from the quarter-final when it was a 2-2 stalemate, Africa's number one star, Quadri Aruna, secured the vital win against the Malaysians.

Although Team Nigeria lost in the doubles and one singles games, Aruna won two singles coupled with Omotayo Olajide's one.

Nevertheless, Team Nigeria has progressed to the quarter-final in the 71-75kg boxing event.

The surge into the round of eight emanated from a defeat handed by Adeyika Benson of Nigeria to Abubakari Kwesi of Team Ghana.

Pep unperturbed over Haaland's misses

Manchester City manager, Pep Guardiola, believes the right time will present itself when new signing Erling Haaland will deliver goals for the club.

The former Borussia Dortmund striker, in the Community Shield match against eventual winners Liverpool, missed over three golden opportunities including an open-net chance in which his effort hit the crossbar.

While the player was unable to put his name on the scoresheet for City, Julian Alvarez who also joined the club recently, got a leveller for City to cancel Trent Alexander-Arnold's strike for the Reds.

Probably, had Haaland converted his opportunities, City would have edged out Jurgen Klopp's men for a seventh FA Community Shield title.

After the match, Guardiola, defending the player who he said was always well positioned to receive the ball, claimed the Norwegian will do better when handed another chance.

He said, "He had chances, two or three in the first half, and one in the end, and always is there.

"He is strong, another time he will put it in the net. It happened. It is football. He was there. He had another goal disallowed because the ball was over the line," Guardiola added.

The City boss underlined that the player is undergoing a process to adapt to a new league and country and reiterated that the centre-forward was rightly positioned.

He continued: "He fought a lot and made the movements. It is good for him to see the reality of a new country and new league.

"He was there but today he didn't score and another day he will score. He has an incredible quality and he will do it.

"He has had just two weeks, two weeks and a half, and I am really comfortable with what we are seeing since we arrived this season. I am not absolutely concerned.

"The reality is we have two or three months ahead of us. He is going to help us," Guardiola admitted.

Manchester City's first Premier League match is against West Ham United at London Stadium where Haaland is expected to lead the attack of the defending champions.



Calvin Bassey sees red as PSV beat Ajax 5-3 in Dutch Super Cup

■ He's gone a little too wild- Ajax boss

Nigerian defender Calvin Bassey saw a red card on his debut for Ajax against PSV in the Johan Cruyff Shield match where the last season's Dutch league champions were battered 5-3 at the Johan Cruyff Arena.

Bassey was signed in the summer transfer window to fill the defensive void after Lisandro Martinez left to reunite with Erik ten Hag in Old Trafford

The young, prospective world-class defender, who shot himself into

the limelight at Rangers under Giovanni van Bronckhorst in the second phase of last season, saw a red card 6 minutes after Mohammed Kudus netted for the Dutch champions.

PSV took the lead after Guus Til's brace in the first half cancelled Steven Bergwijn's 15-minute opener for Ajax.

Following, Anthony equalised for Bassey's team but in quick succession, two goals from Cody Gakpo and Guus Til gave PSV a 4-2

advantage.

However, Ghanian Kudus netted for Ajax to ignite a probable brink of a comeback before Bassey, who substituted Owen Wijndal in the 62nd minute, conceded a yellow card which was withdrawn by referee Dennis Higler after a VAR review to issue a straight red.

Xavi Simons got a late finisher for PSV to deny Alfred Schreuder his first trophy since he took over from Ten Hag as Ajax's new boss.

Meanwhile, Schreuder agreed to referee Higler's

call in issuing a red card to the young defender which he claimed was a deciding factor in the game.

"In the end, I think the red card was decisive," he said.

"You felt we could go on and win it but it is always more difficult with one less man.

"I looked at the incident after the game and he certainly didn't do it deliberately but he's gone in a little too wild.

"I admit a red card could have been given and I can understand why they gave it," he added.

Consequently, Bassey will not feature for Ajax in their first Eredivisie fixture when they travel to Offermans Joosten Stadion to face Fortuna Sittard.

Aiteo Cup: Dakkada walkover Rivers United to round 32

Dakkada FC have progressed to the round of 32 after the newly crowned champions of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL), Rivers United, pulled out of the Federation Aiteo Cup.

The match was scheduled to take place in Owerri, Imo State, with Dakkada FC and match officials already on the pitch awaiting a formal communication from the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF).

According to reports, Rivers United needed to pull out of the competition to avail quality time to prepare adequately for the CAF Champions League.

What this means is that Dakkada FC got a walkover to slate a second round tie with the winner between FRSC and Adoration FC in Ilorin.

Meanwhile, the resolve by the NPFL champions is not unconnected to their hunger for a continental triumph after putting up a distinctive season's campaign to lift their maiden league trophy.

Recall that the number one fan of the Pride of Rivers and Governor of Rivers States, His Excellency, Nyesom Wike, had charged them to bring the CAF trophy home with a series of promises to invigorate their quest for success.

Bearing the above in mind with recourse to the splash of cash reward and state's award, coach Stanley Eguma's side would not want any external interference with their continental preparations.

However, the 2022 Aiteo Cup victors will join Remo Stars, who qualified for finishing 3rd place in the recently concluded NPFL season, to represent Nigeria at the CAF Confederation Cup tourney.



Bayern Munich beat Leipzig to win German Super Cup

Bayern Munich defeated RB Leipzig 5-3 to win the German Super Cup with Sadio Mane getting his first goal at Red Bull Arena Stadium.

The African footballer of the year, who joined the Bavarians this summer, got his name on the scoresheet after Jamal Musial's opener in the 14-minute.

Mane doubled the German giants' lead in the 31-minute before Benjamin Pavard's 45th-minute goal earned the Bavarians a first-half 3-nil.

Marcel Halstenberg

responded 59th minute later for Leipzig to reduce the 3-0 deficit which did not last long before Serge Gnabry cancelled the effect to hand Bayern Munich a 4-1 scoreline.

Consequent to what looks almost like a comeback for Leipzig after Christopher Nkunku and Dani Olmo reduced the deficit to one, Leroy Sane left it late to chatter the hope of Red Bulls as Bayern Munich won 5-3.

The Bundesliga champions have started the season on a goals-thumping streak despite losing their ace scorer Robert Lewandowski to

Barcelona in the summer.

However, Mane has proven to be reliable in delivering goals having found the back of the net during the preseason tour against DC United and responded again against Leipzig to justify his £35m move from Liverpool.

As Bayern travel to Deutsche Bank Park to play Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga opener on Friday, the former Liverpool forward Sadio Mane will be high-spirited to lead the attack against the last Europa League champions.

Commonwealth Games: Olarinoye wins first gold medal for Nigeria in weightlifting

By OVIRI KELVIN, Sports Editor, Abuja

Adijat Adenike Olarinoye has clinched the first gold medal for Team Nigeria in the Women's Weightlifting at the ongoing Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

Olarinoye defeated her competitors in Women's 55kg, lifting 92kg in the snatch, and 111kg in the clean/jerk to amass 203kg in total.

This is a good start in the medal table for Team Nigeria which recently finished the World Athletics Championships in Oregon high-spirited with Ese Brume clinching the silver medal in the long jump and Tobi Amusan setting a world record in 100m.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Hon Sunday Dare, was in Birmingham



to cheer Team Nigeria to victory.

Dare, earlier arrived in Birmingham on July 27, 2022, to join other Commonwealth Nations to attend the 10th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting at the Commonwealth Secretariat.

According to a report by the Sports Ministry, the Honourable Minister in the Birmingham meeting, emphasised sports' human

rights and equality issues as nations regain their balances after the peak of the covid-19 pandemic.

Dare among his colleagues highlighted the importance of sports in the actualisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Remarkably, the Sports Minister was at the weightlifting event where Olarinoye shot the first gold medal to put the name of the

most populous black nation on the medal chart.

Nevertheless, Dare's presence is a follow-up on his charge to Team Nigeria to be good ambassadors and make the nation proud in the Commonwealth Games.

Team Nigeria compete in nine sports including weightlifting which Olarinoye has started to inscribe the country's name in gold.

Nunez shines as Liverpool win 16th Community Shield title

Liverpool have lifted their sixteenth Community Shield trophy after they walloped last season's Premier League champions, Manchester City, 3-1 on Saturday, 30th July at the King Power Stadium.

The contest was a feast of goals for the Reds who were decisive to clinically finish off their chances despite being surpassed on goal attempts and possessions by City.

English right-back, Trent Alexander-Arnold, was the first to open the goal bank for Jurgen Klopp's side in the 21st-minute to dazzle the tension in the first half before Manchester City equalised through Julian Alvarez 20 minutes to the 90.

However, in what could be likely an even scoreline to the 90 was averted as Mohamed Salah slotted in a spot-kick in the 83rd before Liverpool's newbie, Darwin Núñez rounded up the crusade of goals.

It was a disappointing day for Manchester City's newbie Erling Haaland who was one of the players on the lookout as his attempts were either hitting the crossbar or held by Liverpool's goalie Adrian.

Meanwhile, in a post-match interview, Trent Alexander-Arnold said the win was of importance to the squad because they have started the season on a

winning note. "This one means a lot as it's the third time we've been in it. Our season started today and it was important for us to get off on the right foot," he told the media.

The right-back praised Nunez for his excellent performance during the game where he won a penalty and scored a late winner.

He said, "[Nunez's performance] has got to be up there. He won the penalty, scored a goal and looked very lively. He's been bought in to score goals and he's proved he can do that today.

"He's a top player, a young player who is willing to learn. He's bonded well with the lads. He came on with a point to prove," Trent Alexander-Arnold added.

He stressed the club aim for a wonderful season where they hope to win titles in the end.

"Who knows what will happen throughout the season? We aim to be as fit as possible to push them from the very first kick. This was the perfect start and we hope to win trophies along the way," he reiterated.

Liverpool, who were last season's contenders for the Premier League trophy, travel to Craven Cottage on Saturday, August 6 to take on Fulham.

Madrid eye UEFA Super Cup triumph, beat Juventus 2-0

Real Madrid defeated Juventus 2-0 to end their preseason tour on a winning note at the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, California.

Los Blancos got the first goal from its prolific goal poacher Karim Benzema in a 19-minute spot-kick and a second-half strike by Marco Asensio to hand the Old Ladies their first defeat in their US preseason tour.

Juventus started their preseason tour against Guadalajara on a winning streak after they were surmounted by Inter Milan last season in the Coppa Italia final.

They went on to snap an equaliser

conservatively through Moise Kean's brace against Barcelona in the Cotton Bowl Stadium, Dallas, Texas.

However, the clash with the UEFA Champions League winners was a different scenario as they were outclassed to concede their first preseason defeat.

While for Los Blancos, it was a re-ignition of their last season's prowess after starting the preseason tour on a losing note to Barcelona at the Allegiant Stadium last week's Sunday.

Coach Carlo Ancelotti's side after conceding a 1-0 loss to the Catalans failed



to preserve their 2-1 lead against Club America following Benzema's leveller of Henry Martin's opener and Eden Hazard's penalty strike.

Remarkably, Madrid which is scheduled for a

UEFA Super Cup clash with Europa champions Eintracht Frankfurt on August 10 hopes to harp on positives from the Juventus victory to boost their success against the German side.



AITEO CUP: Bendel Insurance defeat Katsina United Jnr 2-0

Bendel Insurance FC on Saturday, defeated Katsina United Junior 2-0 in the Federation Aiteo Cup clash at the FIFA Goal Project in Abuja.

The Edo State-based club in the presence of the Deputy Governor of the State, Rt. Hon Philip Shaibu, who was available to cheer the team to victory, did not fail to humble their challengers convincingly.

The Vipers topped last season's group B1 chart of the Nigeria National League (NNL) to regain promotion to the top tier with 46 points; ten

points above Gateway United.

In their run for the promotion ticket to the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL), the Vipers having lost to Adoration FC in April, reignited their push to maintain a 9-match unbeaten run until the season ended in July, including battering close contender Gateway United 4-0.

Succinctly, their performance against the Northern side in Abuja is an extension of the outstanding feat accomplished last season in the second tier.



Brazil win eighth Copa America Femenina title

Brazil women's senior team defeated the Colombia female team to win their eighth Copa America Femenina title in Bucaramanga, Colombia.

In a 1-0 win, the Brazilian female team slotted in a penalty kick to make a mess of goalie Catalina Perez after Debinha Miri was brought down by Colombian defender Manuel Vanegas in the 18-yard box.

It is noteworthy to express that this is the fourth consecutive triumph for the Brazilian females to rule the South



American continent and the eighth time they are lifting the coveted continental trophy.

In their quest for the Copa America Femenina, Brazil were exemplary to net 20 goals in six games

without conceding any in the process, including the win against Colombia.

More so, in eight out of nine times of the Copa America Femenina, the Brazilians have soared, earning \$1,500,000 in prize money as the winners of the event while Columbia were awarded \$500,000 as runner-up.

Meanwhile, by ending their campaign in the top three, Brazil and Colombia have qualified for the 2023 World Cup, and also secured their spots in the 2023 Paris Olympics after reaching the final.

Usyk, Joshua rematch: Organisers draw undercard

By OVIRI KELVIN, Sports Editor, Abuja

The much anticipated heavyweight rematch between Oleksandr Usyk and Anthony Joshua is drawing closer by the day as we enter the month of August.

Like what seemed forever to happen in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to sports lovers and importantly, to the British who want revenge for his defeat last year, is close to reality.

The fight scheduled for August 20 at Jeddah Super Dome in Saudi Arabia already has its undercard fixed. This has further raised the level of expectancy about the hypothetically most debated bout in recent times in boxing history.

According to the fixtures



of the undercard, the undefeated Croatian Filip Hrgovic, with fourteen wins and 12 knockouts, fights China's undefeated Zhilei Zhang, who has a record of 19 knockouts from 24 wins, in a Final Eliminator for the IBF Heavyweight World Title.

While for the Final Eliminator for the World Title with its current champion being Russian Artur Beterbiev, English Callum Smith, with 20

knockouts from 28 wins, tangles with French Mathieu Bauderlique, who has recorded 20 knockouts from 28 wins.

Joshua is eager to reclaim his heavyweight championship belts, WBA (Super), IBF, WBO, and IBO heavyweight titles from the Usyk who left Ukraine, presently being ravaged by the Russian army, to honour the challenge activated in principle last year.

"The rematch was specified in the contract," Alexander Krassyuk, Usyk boxing promoter said last year in a press conference.

"It has already been activated in principle, from the side of Joshua.

"So I remember when we discussed with Oleksandr the issue of a rematch, he was delighted and said 'Wow, cool, I will beat Antokha [Anthony] twice,'" he added.

Both greats will look to share at least £100m in the cracking rematch but what is more pressing is to even or extend their head-to-head record.

Other fixtures for the undercard include Tyrone Spong against Andrew Tabiti, Daniel Lapin against Jozef Jurko, Ramla Ali tangles Crystal Garcia Nova, Ziyad Almaayouf battles Hector Alatorre and Badou Jack pitched against Richard Rivera.

Kounde, a defence fixer - Xavi

Barcelona boss Xavi Hernandez has praised Jules Kounde as a good signing who has the needed leadership acumen to lead the defensive line of the Catalans.

Xavi said the defender brings in a competitive challenge in the defensive lineup which is good for the club's target to win titles.

The Spanish manager described the former Sevilla's player as being versatile and can play as a winger as does Ronald Araujo, which is a vital factor in the club's yearnings for success.

According to him, every player will have to fight for a spot in the starting lineup by giving their best performances.

"He is a very good signing, he will help us a lot. When the ball is out, he knows how to fix the central defenders, he has leadership capacity," Xavi said in the preview of the match against the New York Red Bulls.

"With the rest of the defensive line, to compete and try to win titles, which is the main objective.

"He can play as a winger, like Ronald and for him, it means competition, it means a lot to us, the one who performs best will play.

"Like everyone [Pique], everyone is going to compete for a position, the one who gives the most performance will play. And the more options he [Xavi] has, the better," the Barcelona boss reiterated.

Kounde has been on the radar of several European clubs with Chelsea at the forefront of the pursuit of the defender.

West London having lost to a free transfer Andreas Christensen and Antonio Rudiger to Barcelona and Real Madrid respectively swooped into the summer transfer window to beef up its backline.

They resorted to different alternatives in Italy with Inter Milan defender Milan Skriniar and Juventus Matthijs de Ligt spotted for an imminent move.

Unpleasant to the Blues, the asking price for Skriniar was above the Blues valuation for the player which saw Paris Saint-Germain beat them at the forefront while Dutch De Ligt was snapped to Allianz Arena away from their grips.

Barcelona have been very active in the transfer market swooping on top targets ahead of the start of the new campaign.

The Cataluan-based club have been able to bolster its attack with the signing of Robert Lewandowski from Bayern Munich and Brazilian Raphinha from Leeds United.

Also advantageous are the signing of Andreas Christensen from Chelsea and Franck Kessie from AC Milan on a free transfers with Jules Kounde the recent addition to a club that have not ruled out further deals.

Xavi said, "Everything that is reinforced is good. I already said that there should be two players per position, more this year with the World Cup.

"We need footballers to compete and to be better. Yes, we want to reinforce ourselves more, the more the better," he added.

Barcelona open the 2022-23 season with a La Liga fixture against Rayo Vallecano in Camp Nou. Last season, the Vallecans defeated Catalans 1-0 on their home ground through a sublime finish by Alvaro Garcia.



Milenkovic's decision over future alerts clubs

Serbian defender, Nikola Milenkovic, has been told by Fiorentina to give his decision about his future.

This resolve by Fiorentina, to the centre-back who has a contract until 2023 at Stadio Artemio Franchi, became imperative not to lose him on a free transfer.

Getting wind of the latest resolve by the Purples, European clubs are red on alert to swing in on the 24-year-old versatile defender that also plays in the right-wing-back position.

Atletico, a long-time admirer of the Serbian, would open the option to

secure the signature of the player despite ruling out further transfer deals this summer.

The Spanish club signed Nahuel Molina from Udinese, and Axel Witsel from Borussia Dortmund with several players returning from loan moves to Estadio Metropolitano. These additions have given Diego Simeone's side reasons not to do further summer deals except if an inalienable market opportunity is presented.

Probably, that opportunity may soon be presented with the recent decision by Fiorentina that has engineered the Spanish



club to be on standby to rival other clubs for the targeted asset.

Among the clubs, Atletico should be ready to battle with Tottenham that have reportedly entered talks with Fiorentina for the

Serbian.

Reports from Italy said that the Premier League club resumed talks with the Italian club after they missed signing the player last season following a heated transfer battle with West Ham.

I'm in a right place, says Lewandowski

Accuses Bayern of complicity

Barcelona forward Robert Lewandowski said his move to the Spanish club was the right time to accept a new challenge in his career.

The Pole, who is with the club on their pre-season tour, accused Bayern Munich of complicity which was a

ploy to thwart the deal from scaling through.

According to the 34-year-old striker on Friday during an interview with ESPN, Bayern Munich exploited all political machinations to hamper negotiation in a bid to justify their position.

"I feel like I'm in the right position, in the right place. What happened in the last few weeks before I left Bayern was also political," Lewandowski said.

"The club tried to find a fight to justify my sale because maybe it was difficult to explain to them.

"And I have to accept this even if there were a lot of lies, a lot of lies about me. They were false things, but in the end, I know that the fans, even in this period, are still very supportive of me," he added.

The Pole joined Bayern Munich eight seasons ago from Borussia Dortmund and netted 344 times in 375 appearances to win many Bundesliga

titles and the UEFA Champions League alongside domestic accolades.

He continued: "Some people don't tell the truth, they say something different. For me, it was always important to be clear, and honest, and perhaps for some, this was a problem.

"In the end, I know that I realized that if something wasn't right with myself either, then maybe it was a good time to leave Bayern and sign for Barcelona," Lewandowski added.

He admitted that he is excited to seal the deal that has presented a new challenge where he hopes to score more goals and do what he knows how to do best.

Mathys Tel joins Bayern on five-year deal

German champions Bayern Munich have secured the services of Stade Rennes' striker, Mathys Tel on a five-year deal to keep him at Allianz Arena until 2027.

Having lost star striker Robert Lewandowski to Barcelona this summer immediately after signing CAF player of the year Sadio Mane from Liverpool, Bavarians are on a campaign to bring in fresh additions to the club.

According to the report on Tuesday, the 17-year-old who captained France U17 national team in February 2022 in his debut, was signed circa 30 million euro to become the fifth signing this summer for Bayern Munich

In a statement by Hasan Salihamidzic, the club's board member on sport, he described Tel as a talented player and divulged that the Frenchman

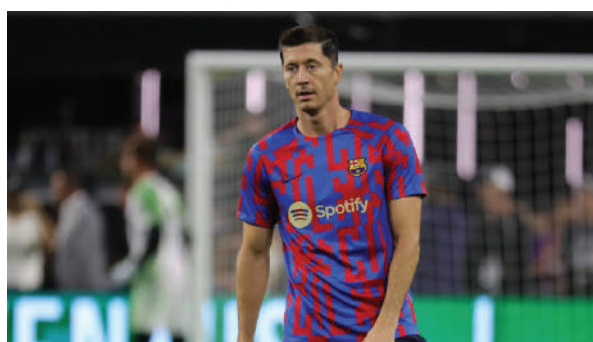
has been under the club's watchlist.

Salihamidzic stated that several clubs were in a race to sign Tel but Bayern Munich were able to convince the striker who grew through the youth ranks of Stade Rennes to feature 7 times last season in Ligue 1.

"Mathys Tel is one of the biggest talents in Europe, a very quick, technically strong and versatile striker," Hasan Salihamidzic, said.

"We've been watching him for a long time, and we were able to convince him to take his next important steps in Munich with us now," he added.

He continued: "The development of such an exceptional young player is an exciting project for us all. Of course, Mathys needs time, he needs minutes on the pitch and rhythm.





Emirates reduces flights to Nigeria over trapped \$85m revenue

By **ADAKU WALTER**

Emirates Airlines has announced plans to reduce its flights to Nigeria from August 15, 2022, due to its inability to repatriate trapped revenue amounting to \$85 million in the country.

The airline said it has no choice, but to reduce the flights from Dubai to Lagos from 11 to seven per week to mitigate the con-tinued losses it is experiencing as a result of the situation.

Emirates made this known in a letter dated July 22, 2022, signed by the Divisional Senior Vice President (DSVP), International Affairs, Sheikh Majid Mualla and addressed to the Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika.

“Emirates will be forced to reduce flights from Dubai to Lagos from 11 per week to seven per week. We have had no choice, but to take this action to

mitigate the continued losses Emirates is experiencing as a result of funds being blocked in Nigeria.

“As of July 2022, Emirates had \$85 million funds awaiting repatriation from Nigeria. This figure has been rising by over \$10 million monthly, as the ongoing operational costs of our 11 weekly flights to Lagos and five to Abuja continue to accumulate,” the letter reads.

It said the funds were urgently needed to meet its operational costs and maintain the commercial viability of its services to Nigeria, adding that it could not continue to operate at the current level with mounting losses, especially in the challenging post-COVID-19 pandemic climate.

Emirates further explained that it tried to stem the losses by proposing to pay for fuel in Nigeria in naira, which would have at least reduced the costs, but the suppliers denied

the request.

“This means that not only are Emirates’ revenues accumulating, but we also have to send dollars to Nigeria to sustain our operations, while our revenues are out of reach and not earning any credit interest.

“This decision was not taken lightly. Indeed, we have reached out to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to find a solution to the issue. Our Senior Vice-President met the Deputy Governor of the CBN in May and followed up on the meeting through a letter in June.

“However, no positive response was received. Meetings were also held with Emirates’ own bank in Nigeria and in collaboration with the IATA to discuss improving FX allocation, but with limited success,” it stated.

Emirates disclosed that despite several efforts, the situation continued to deteriorate, and is now in the unfortunate



position of having to cut flights, to mitigate further losses going forward.

“While we appreciate that this issue is primarily a financial one, any support you could

kindly provide would be warmly welcomed by Emirates. We are confident that your valuable involvement will make a real difference in improving this very difficult situation,” the

letter added.

The airlines further noted that if there is any positive development where it can have access to funds soon, it will re-evaluate the decision and revert to normal operations.

Intelligence operatives arrest 4 informants behind Kuje prison attack

By **PAUL MICHAEL**

Four informants suspected to be leaking information to terrorists about troops’ locations and movements around the outskirts of Abuja have been arrested.

The criminals are already in the custody of a security agency.

But an intelligence operative told PRNigeria that the suspects were arrested with sophisticated equipment including Walkie-Talkies, revolvers, knives, amulets, and old Chinese made phones, that do not use data.

The source, who was part of the raid

that led to the arrest of the informants, said discreet investigations are ongoing to confirm their leaders and financiers.

The source claimed that activities of the terrorist collaborators were responsible for the recent attacks around the vicinity of the Federal Capital

Territory (FCT).

“The suspects are currently being interrogated to determine if they are working for terrorist groups or armed bandits or other elements with ulterior motives.

“I can authoritatively inform you that, while the military has

deliberately refused to provide updates since the attack on Kuje Prison, to last attacks on troops at the Bwari and Zuma Rock axis, the joint se-curity task force has so far killed more than 70 armed criminals, including dangerous Kuje prison escapees and terrorists,” the source

added. Meanwhile, it gathered that the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) is coordinating a discreet intelligence operation that is providing new clues and traces of groups behind recent attacks on security personnel and formations.